Probationer allegedly traveled to Guam twice without notification. PAGE 3
'*Post* story downplays the CNMI's own efforts' PAGE 5

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Categorical parole bill hits snag

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Sablan

H.R. 559 has hit a temporary obstacle. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security wants to delete a provision in the bill that would allow people to challenge a DHS or U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services decision.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), who introduced H.R. 559 in U.S. Congress to save the immigration status of about 1,038 people in the CNMI, wants to include a provision in the bill that individuals could actually challenge a decision of USCIS or DHS.

"And DHS doesn't want that," said Sablan.

He pointed out that 1,038 people

See PAROLE BILL on Page 4

Distressed vessel towed to marina

The Boating Safety unit of the Department of Public Safety successfully rescued a distressed 14-foot vessel just west of Banzai Cliff last Friday, April 19. The two persons onboard were found safe.

According to a DPS statement about the incident, the department received a 911 call at about 3:50pm about two individuals aboard the distressed vessel.

At about 4:11pm, DPS Boating Safety officers left the Smiling Cove Marina aboard the *Impact* rescue boat. They came upon the vessel, floating just outside the reef of Wing Beach, at around 4:30pm.

See MARINA on Page 4

SENATE SESSION
Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan and former Tinian mayor JP San Nicolas await the start of a Senate session, where the lawmakers unanimously passed House Bill 21-37 that would re-align $1,090,000 and be used to fund the salaries of Tinian municipal employees beyond the May 10 payroll. JON PEREZ

See story on Page 4

HK Airlines remains

File photo shows a Hong Kong Airlines plane. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A total of 242 passengers arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Monday, marking the inaugural flight of Hong Kong Airlines under its new management.

Following the departure of the carrier's previous operator, tourism conglomerate UTour Group Co., Ltd. and its affiliates took over operations of the direct charter flight between Hong Kong and Saipan.

Top Development Inc. is the sole land operator of the charter.

The handover of HKA to a CNMI-based operation marks a key milestone for Top Development Inc., a mainstay in the CNMI travel and

See HK AIRLINES on Page 4

Visitor arrivals at 32,000 in March

According to the Marianas Visitors Authority, arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota totaled 32,295 in March 2019 compared to 53,714 in March 2018, led by a downward tick in the Korean market on the slowdown of the country's economy.

Arrivals from Korea, which had been showing steady recovery since Super Typhoon Yutu, marked 13,370 visitors in March, a 47-percent decline compared to March 2018.

Arrivals from China showed the same reduced trend as the previous month, marking a 17-percent decline to 16, 558 visitors due to a weak domestic economy and residual impact from the typhoon. In addition, March

See VISITOR on Page 4

INSIDE

ASIA
More than 200 people are killed and hundreds more are wounded in Sri Lanka's deadliest violence yet.
PAGE 15

FOCUS
Dropping her kids off at school used to be the hardest part of Kacey Ruegsegger Johnson's day.
PAGE 17

LIFE & STYLE
"Avengers: Endgame" is one of the year's biggest releases. Take a look at how Marvel has built its juggernaut.
PAGE 19

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Local

Free flu vaccinations

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

With an increasing number of flu cases in the CNMI, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. announced that it will be giving free flu vaccinations as a means to counter this trend.

In a statement over the weekend, CHCC said it has seen an increase in the number of influenza cases in the CNMI over the last few weeks, particularly among young children and people who are unvaccinated.

"Young children and older adults are more likely to get the flu because their immune system is not as healthy. Complications from the flu can include pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, and the worsening of chronic conditions such as asthma. In severe cases, the flu may even require hospitalization," CHCC warned.

The statement did not provide specific numbers.

The free flu shots will be administered at the CHCC Immunization Program clinic.

There will also be public outreaches on:

■ April 27 at the Community Mobile Literacy Fair at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, from 10am to 12:30pm;

■ April 30, 2019 at the Women's Health Month kick-off at the Garapan Central Park, from 5:30pm to 8:30pm; and

■ May 3, 2019 at the Marianas March Against Cancer at the Airport Field, from 5:30pm to 8:30pm.

"In addition to providing free flu vaccines at the clinic, the Immunization Program is starting to do outreach at elementary schools and daycare centers to protect the most vulnerable members of the community," the statement noted.

The best method to avoid the flu is through a "consistent and correct" handwashing technique.

CHCC recommends that you first wet your hands with clean running water before applying soap, then lather the soap between your hands, the backs of your hands, and between and under your fingers and nails for at least 20 seconds.

"Hum the 'Happy Birthday' song from beginning to end twice," CHCC suggested as a makeshift timer.

Rinse after lathering and dry with a clean towel.

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Probationer allegedly traveled to Guam twice without notification

A woman who was sentenced last year to two years of probation for lying in a passport application for her daughter was discovered to have traveled to Guam twice without notifying the U.S. Probation Office—a violation of the terms of her supervised release.

Because of this, U.S. probation officer Gregory F. Arriola has asked that Bernieann Taitingfong Rahman be made to explain before the U.S. District Court for the NMI. Without a credible explanation, Rahman runs the risk of having her supervised release revoked or modified.

Rahman was convicted of lying on Aug. 3, 2018, and was sentenced to two years of probation with conditions. Her probation is set to expire on Aug. 2, 2020.

According to Arriola, Rahman failed to submit monthly supervision reports for October, November, and December in 2018, and in January 2019. Rahman also submitted late reports for March and April 2019.

When Rahman failed to show up at the U.S. Probation Office in April, Arriola said he and probation officer Juanette David-Atalig attempted to contact Rahman, without success.

On April 10, 2019, Arriola said he received information that Rahman had gone to Guam on Feb. 10, 2019, and returned on March 12, 2019. He also got information that Rahman had also gone to Guam on March 14, 2019, and returned to Saipan on April 11, 2019. Both travels were supposedly for work-related matters but Arriola noted that Rahman is jobless.

Last April 11, Arriola visited Rahman at her home and confronted her about her travels to Guam. She allegedly admitted it and apologized for leaving Saipan without proper authorization, explaining that she went to visit someone in Guam, and to attend a funeral service for her goddaughter.

She explained that she did not make a request with the U.S. Probation Office because she was "scared" that her travel request would not be approved.

Arriola said he called the person with whom Rahman stayed with in Guam to verify Rahman's story. He said that person confirmed that Rahman was with him in Guam and that he paid for her airfare when she visited him in February and March 2019, but the person does not recall Rahman attending a funeral while in Guam.

When presented with this information, Arriola said, Rahman admitted lying about it and apologized.

He said Rahman also wants to leave Saipan because she is having issues in her household and wants to escape her problems and relocate to Guam to find a job.

Arriola said that Rahman already paid her $100 special assessment fee last December and that she is currently working on completing her 100 hours of community service.

In March 2018, Rahman pleaded guilty to lying in a DS-11 application for U.S. passport as part of a plea deal. Rahman filed the DS-11 on July 6, 2017, on behalf of her daughter, omitting the name of her daughter's father in the application.

On Aug. 16, 2017, Rahman told Diplomatic Security Service resident agent-in-charge Marc Weinstock and special agent Joseph Kramer that she omitted the father's name because, at the time, the only birth certificate she had of her daughter also omitted the father's name. This was a lie. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Lion's Club youth camp in Guam

Lion's Club International held a youth camp last week in Guam, with 13 students from Saipan participating.

The club's Leadership, Experience, and Opportunity camp was held last April 12-14 at the Aga Sagan Bisita in Guam. A total of 41 participants ages 12 to 18 years old joined the camp.

"They are the prospective Lions Clubs members once they turn 18," said LCI region 2 chair Annamae Adaza in a statement.

Youth Lion's Clubs are called Leo Clubs. Right now, there are three on Saipan: the Saipan Unity Teens Leo Club, Saipan Marianas Alpha Leo Club, and Saipan Mighty Dolphins Leo Club.

The annual camp focuses on meeting different people, sharing different talents, and establishing friendships.

"The annual camp…brings out the best in [students]," Adaza said.

The camp included a presentation from the Guam National Guard and the Guam Police Department, along with several activities such as watercolor arts, shirt weaving, first aid presentations, coconut leaf weaving and a presentation from Lion's Club International.

"It was the first time for majority of the members to join the camp and to travel to Guam, so all of them were excited," added Adaza. ***(Erwin Encinares)***

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DPS evidence room has not seen improvement since 2015

The Department of Public Safety's evidence room that was destroyed back in 2015 as a result of the onslaught of Super Typhoon Soudelor has not seen any improvement in the past three years.

The Office of the Public Auditor will be inspecting DPS' evidence room in June and, according to DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero, there has been nothing done in terms of its recovery.

The last inspection was done back in 2015.

"For the last three years, it's the same findings it's always been. Nothing has been done since Soudelor," he said.

Guerrero said that he has already voiced his frustrations about the matter and has even brought up the issue with higher-ups but nothing has been done. With Guerrero as the DPS chief, that effectively means the Office of the Governor.

"Until that gets fixed, I will continue to bring it up," Guerrero said.

Aside from the evidence room, Guerrero said that OPA also cited five other issues with DPS but they have all been resolved.

"We resolved all the OPA findings. Out of five or six that were found, we resolved all of it except for that one [the evidence room] and if we don't get that building fixed, that problem will remain as a finding," he said.

Guerrero said that funding is not the issue because it should be covered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the responsibility to rebuild the facility lies with the Office of the Governor.

"I don't believe [it's a funding issues]. It was destroyed by Soudelor so that's a FEMA issue and, from my understanding, the money is there. Unfortunately, we don't take care of the procurement or services or materials to fix the building so that's where the problem exist. The authority to act on that is under the Governor's Office directly," he said.

Currently, the DPS fitness room has been serving as the temporary DPS evidence room.

"We need that [evidence room]. Right now, the facility that's being occupied as an evidence room [is] actually the physical fitness facility for our officers and their families," he said. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

Despite additional funds, austerity measures are still eyed for Tinian

Even if Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signs a bill to realign funds to the municipality, that doesn't mean the Tinian municipality will be flush with cash.

Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan still plans to implement austerity and other belt-tightening measures in order to stretch out that extra cash until the end of the current fiscal year.

Aldan made this assurance as the CNMI Senate unanimously passed House Bill 21-37 into law yesterday, a bill to realign $1.09 million to fund the salaries of Tinian municipal employees beyond the May 10 payroll.

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) commended the Tinian leadership for being creative in identifying the funding source. "I fully support the legislation as the Municipality of Tinian is being threatened by an imminent work furlough, including stopping critical public services and programs if the legislation is not acted on by the Senate."

H.B. 21-37, introduced by Rep. Antonio SN Borja (R-Tinian), now heads to the desk of Torres. Aldan hopes for immediate action.

Once it becomes law, the money would secure the payroll of almost 50 employees under the Tinian Mayor's Office, the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission, and the Tinian Municipal Treasury.

"I've asked the governor for his consideration. There is also an attorney general that makes the final decision before the governor signs it. So, I respectfully ask the attorney general to consider the urgency of this bill," said Aldan. "The funds will not only go to employment but it would also help with our scholarships, medical referral and cancer patients, and dog control program—almost all of our municipal programs. …These are good programs that we want to keep."

He said that Super Typhoon Yutu disrupted the municipality's finances. They used up the allocated funds they received for the current fiscal year to help the island recover after being hit by the super typhoon. "If not for [Yutu], we wouldn't be here asking…the Legislature to pass the bill..."

Aldan said their 2019 funds paid for the gasoline and to pay vendors such as stores and restaurants for food and water delivered to those in need. "These are going to be reimbursed by [the Federal Emergency Management Agency]. But, while we're waiting for FEMA, we are short on funds to continue the payroll for the employees.

"We do have something planned, even if we get the money. We [have a] plan how to further spread these funds to take them beyond, possibly, fiscal year 2019, if we do some austerity measures. There will be cuts on hours of operation, there would be have to be, because we don't foresee additional revenue [at the] municipal level. …So, for us to survive and to stretch this thing out, we need to do some austerity measures." ***(Jon Perez)***

PAROLE BILL

From Page 1

are going to be applying for this program if the law passes.

"Some bureaucrat somewhere is going to sit down and review the application or petition, review it, and make a decision. And you can't challenge that decision. That's wrong," he added.

H.R. 559 is the Northern Mariana Islands Long-Term Legal Residents Relief Act, which—if it passes and becomes a law—would save the status of 1,038 foreign workers that are under the CNMI categorical parole program that was terminated by USCIS last December.

Those affected by USCIS' decision to discontinue the program include:

- Immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and other stateless individuals;
- CNMI permanent residents and their immediate relatives;
- Immediate relatives of citizens of Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau); and
- Caregivers of CNMI residents.

Sablan introduced H.R. 559 to provide permanent residency status to these individuals. He said that, based on data provided by DHS, 1,038 individuals will be affected when the 180-day transition window ends on June 29.

"H.R. 559 is a bill that the DHS asked us to introduce. So they did give us assistance in drafting the bill. Unfortunately, I want to include in the bill a provision that individuals could actually challenge a decision of USCIS or DHS, if they think that they have been wronged so they could go to court. And DHS doesn't want that," said Sablan.

The Natural Resources Committee for Insular Affairs thinks that what DHS is trying to avoid is to set precedence, Sablan said. "If we do this without the judicial review clause, we're setting a precedent for other immigration bills. And it is wrong, because the United States is founded on the concept that you can actually hold your government accountable," he said.

"Making decisions and knowing that nobody can challenge your decision is wrong, and I wanted to be able to allow these individuals to challenge a decision if need be. But DHS doesn't want that, so that's where the problem is right now," he added.

Sablan said that they would work on this provision when they return from recess later this week. "We're still going to come back after the recess because the bill is already up on the floor three weeks ago. We have to take it down because DHS told us they would not support the bill. But we're going to work on a language that's acceptable to them. I need to get this clause that would protect the participants in the program."

Sablan added that he knows time is critical to pass H.R. 559 and have it signed into law by President Donald Trump. "I also am aware this thing has a timeline, June 29. So while we're doing this in the House, we're already working with the Senate, where they may require a hearing.

"DHS cannot make this difficult by adjusting the timeline from June 30, say, by another 60 or 90 days. But it seems that they don't want to do it."

HK AIRLINES

From Page 1

tourism industry for 30 years. Just last year, TDI partnered with UTour on a joint venture, aptly named U-Top Investment (Saipan), Inc.

"The additional charter is part of our 10-year plan to strengthen the tourism value chain. With our local and offshore industry partners, travel agents consortia, and expansive sales network, we remain committed to boosting the travel and tourism industry here in the CNMI," said TDI president Alfred Ho.

TDI recently procured three new TEMSA buses from the U.S. to service the T Galleria route, bringing its total fleet to 13 buses. TDI also operates the Hangzhou-Saipan charter through Beijing Capital Airlines, providing 500 seats weekly to the CNMI. Hong Kong Airlines brings in an additional 600 seats. Its sister airline, Hong Kong Express, brings in an additional 180 seats four times a week.

As one of China's largest outbound travel operator, UTour has invested and carried out various marketing and teaming agreements with airlines, including United Airlines, Emirates, Air China, ANA, Korean Air, Qatar, etc.

Over the last few years, the conglomerate has also accelerated its thrust into the independent travel and online tourism sectors with investments in online independent travel platforms and travel e-commerce aggregators providing global and user-generated content in Asia's outbound tourism market.

It has been six months since Super Typhoon Yutu tore through the CNMI. Since then, tourism has rebounded and the CNMI is seeing visitor arrivals steadily increasing. ***(PR)***

MARINA

From Page 1

Two minutes later, the DPS rescue boat began towing the distressed vessel and its two passengers back to the Smiling Cove Marina, arriving at the marina at about 5:30pm.

After a quick safety brief, the vessel was found to have all its safety equipment on board and up to date.

DPS Boating Safety officers learned that the captain and his nephew left the Smiling Cove Marina at about 9am and they had planned to head toward Banzai Cliff to fish. After arriving at Banzai Cliff at around 11am, the two began their fishing route and after a couple loops from Banzai Cliff to Cowtown, they planned to call it a day by 4pm.

Before that time the vessel's motor began to lose power; the operator then noticed a thick cloud of white smoke coming from the engine. The operator of the vessel immediately called 911.

The DPS Boating Safety Unit would like to remind all boaters to have a plan when going on a fishing trip, and to share that plan with family members and/or friends. Try to have a more than one means of communication aboard the vessel, and to always check the vessels safety equipment before leaving for your next fishing trip. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

VISITOR

From Page 1

is the traditional low season after the Chinese Spring Festival holiday in February.

Facing the off-season, the MVA is continuing aggressive promotions to rebuild tourists and travel industry's confidence in the Marianas. Other than first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong, the MVA has expanded its activities by participating in the 2019 Xi'an Silk Road International Tourism Expo to further its exploration in the Northwest China market, as well as Marianas Roadshow in Shandong province in early April.

Visitors arrivals from Japan were down at 59 percent, or 2,071 visitors. However, Skymark Airlines has commenced direct flights from Tokyo to the Marianas, making a strong start in reversing the downward turn of the market since Delta Air Lines ceased the direct service in May 2018.

Skymark flew in six charters from March 22 to 27, 2019, and has four additional charters being planned for Japan's Golden Week holiday period, arriving on Saipan on April 27-30. The airline is also slated to start regular daily flights in July 2019, marking a much-anticipated turnaround for the once-dominant market.

"As always, the tourism industry is being influenced by the national economies in our source markets, and the reality is [that] Korea and China are soft at this time, so people are travelling less," said acting MVA managing director Judy Torres. "The [start] of Skymark Airlines [flights] is a light on the horizon for Marianas tourism, and we are working diligently without our available funding to provide the necessary promotions and marketing to support the launch of regular daily service from Tokyo this summer. Having Japan back as a major source market is vital to ensure the stability of and to improve our Marianas tourism economy."

Economic highlights

The International Monetary Fund reported that South Korea's economy will achieve 2.6- 2.7 percent growth in 2019 if the government maintains expansionary fiscal policies to support growth. The average US dollar/won exchange rate in March was 1095.24 won, a slight decrease from the previous rate of 1122.30 won in February

According to China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the number of outbound tourists among Chinese citizens was 149.72 million in 2018, an increase of 14.7 percent over the previous year.

Japan's consumer price inflation stood at 0.2 percent year-on-year in February 2019, unchanged from the previous month's 15-month low and below market expectations of 0.3 percent. Japan National Tourism Organization reported that the number of Japanese overseas travelers was up 10.4 percent year on year, reaching 1,534,800 in February 2019, approximately 140,000 more travelers than a year earlier. ***(MVA)***

'Post story downplays the CNMI's own efforts'

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A *Palm Beach Post* story about a presidential gala for President Donald Trump—which Washington, D.C. lobbyist Jason Osborne described as "grossly inaccurate"—not only appears to downplay the combined efforts of CNMI officials in making known the issues that are happening in the Commonwealth, but also how laws and regulations imposed by the federal government from thousands of miles away affect the everyday lives of people on the islands.

Osborne said that stories like these—"and the way they are written—"kind of takes away the work that the CNMI had done over the last several years to try and improve its image."

He also denied that the Asian Pacific American Presidential Inaugural Gala allegedly raised $107 million, which the *Post* story said, allegedly ended up untraced.

He said the *Post* article's story on the Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act "makes it sound like we're just fighting for foreign workers to come in, when they have no concept of what we're doing to try and build our U.S. workforce." That law provided work slots for foreign workers in the CNMI.

He said that the gala only raised $100,000 and had nothing to do with the presidential inaugural activities. "The Presidential Inaugural may have raised that amount but not this [Asia-Pacific gala] event."

"I'm very disappointed in the lack of honesty in the reporting. Getting attacks by folks that have no clue on how hard we worked in [D.C.] on behalf of the CNMI is another example why I seldom talk to the press," he said.

He added that Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), who also pushed for the Workforce Act in the U.S. Congress, should also be upset about the story. "That reporter put the story out there and… quite frankly, if I'm Kilili, I might also be upset about this article."

"He [Kilili] also worked hard on that Workforce Act and this lady makes it sound like, just because we had this event, we got this Workforce Act signed by President Trump. That's not the reality at all."

Osborne also stressed that he did not take any money from the event or even from the organizers. "I looked at the event as an opportunity for the CNMI to celebrate all the hard work they put into getting the story of the [Commonwealth] into the presidential campaign. Making this out to be salacious is wrong.

"I find it bizarre how someone could say that because I worked for the governor [Gov. Ralph DLG Torres] and the business community that I don't have the best interests of the CNMI at heart. That would imply that either the governor is wrong or the business community is wrong."

He added that all of his clients are on record and open for scrutiny. "All of my clients are public information. So, those that say otherwise are somewhat foolish."

Attao awaits Cannabis Committee report

House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) looks forward to the final report of the House Cannabis Committee regarding House Bill 21-13, which would amend the original law that allowed the use of marijuana in the Commonwealth.

Attao said the members of the Cannabis Committee are already back on the island after attending a cannabis conference. It is led by chair Rep. Janet U. Maratita (R-Saipan) and vice chair Rep. Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan).

"There's already a draft report. They [committee] are just finalizing [it], so that it can be put in place as the [CNMI Cannabis] commission is still trying to get themselves organized," said Attao.

He added that the House Cannabis Committee would incorporate any additional information they may have gathered at the conference.

Although the five-member Cannabis Commission have already been named, it is still illegal to cultivate and use cannabis in the CNMI until the commissioners officially take their oath of office and get themselves organized.

Public Law 20-6, also called the Taulamwaar Sensible CNMI Cannabis Act of 2018, regulates and controls the use of cannabis-based products in the CNMI.

Attao is hoping the amendment bill would finally address all the line-items that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres vetoed when he signed P.L. 20-66 into law last year.

"If there's going to be a bill that would generate revenue for the government, it will be for the entire CNMI government. We're working on revenue-generating legislations that's going to be beneficial to the CNMI," said Attao. "We're here to find ways to improve the livelihood of our people, not our own personal lives. The cannabis amendment bill can be a source of revenue for the government."

He added that Rep. Marco T. Peter (R-Saipan) also has knowledge about cannabis-based products like hemp because he saw how it was with his father, the late David "Taulamwaar" Peter.

"He [Rep. Peter] has a little bit of knowledge regarding hemp that's also in the family cannabis plant. He lived in Washington [state] for many years, he has a little bit of background and knowledge."

Attao said that President Donald Trump has already removed hemp from the list of Schedule 1 substances that are illegal. Industrial hemp cultivation is now legal in all U.S. jurisdictions after Trump signed the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 last December. "So, we might have to remove hemp in the actual legislation." ***(Jon Perez)***

About 12-18 percent of adults in the CNMI had diabetes in 2016

An estimated 12 percent to 18 percent of adults in the CNMI have diabetes, while about two-thirds of them are either overweight or obese, according to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s 2016 Non-Communicable Disease and Risk Factor Report.

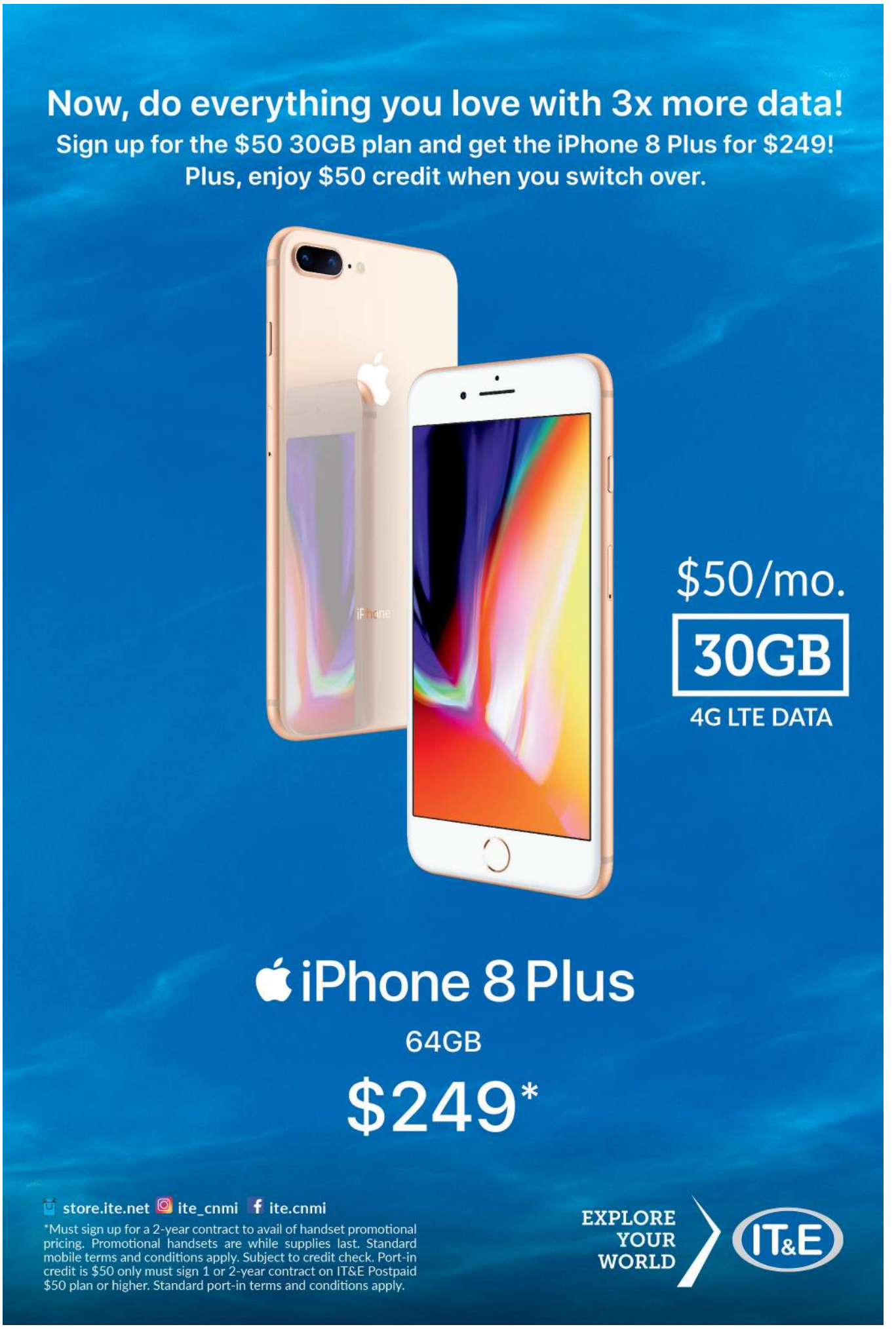
"Additionally, cardiovascular disease and cancer are two of the leading causes of death in the CNMI," CHCC noted in a statement. Being either overweight or obese increases the chances of developing either hypertension or diabetes.

To aid the fight against these chronic diseases, the Non-Communicable Disease Bureau has five programs; the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, the Breast and Cervical Screening Program, the CNMI Cancer Registry Program, and the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program.

The bureau noted that tobacco is one of the main contributors for all cancers, especially head and neck cancer.

The program that tackles tobacco prevention and control offers nicotine cessation services for adults ages 18 and over that want to quit.

"If an individual is ready to quit using nicotine products, they can call the quit-line at 323-QUIT or 323-7848. Depending on availability, the program may also provide Nicotine Replacement Therapy (nicotine patch/gum) to an individual who is ready to quit," CHCC noted. ***(Erwin Encinares)***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Mayor's student exchange program may be axed

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office's annual student exchange programs may be in trouble after a tranche of budget cuts that have to be implemented across the board in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu.

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang noted in an interview with *Saipan Tribune* last week that his office would be getting a large 15-percent cut in its annual budget this fiscal year, prompting the office to start weighing which programs would be axed.

It might include the annual student exchange program with Japan and Korea, he said.

"…As much as we want more [funding], we know how the situation is because of [Super Typhoon Yutu]. …I am sure that, once the economy starts picking up and tourists continue to come in…things will get better," he said.

Apatang added that his office will continue to work with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres about funding needs.

According to Torres' annual budget proposal, the Saipan Mayor's Office will be allotted over $2.6 million in fiscal year 2020.

The office was appropriated $3.5 million in fiscal year 2019; about $453,631 will be cut.

Apatang said he asked for a budget of $3.5 million for fiscal year 2020, which covers expenses for personnel, fuel, vehicle maintenance, and more.

"Everybody got [budget] cuts. We just need to share the burden," he said.

"Looking at next year, I don't think that would be possible," he said, referring to the annual student exchange program. "I believe we need to cut on [expenses]."

"I told them [Saipan Mayor's Office] we might have to cancel everything next year," he said. "We don't know what is going to happen in fiscal year 2021," he added when asked if he is more hopeful about the next fiscal year.

"I am hopeful that we will continue to provide services to the general public. I am sure the governor is concerned about that, too, and expending any other ways to cut down on expenses so we can drive on," he said.

Yutu hit Saipan and Tinian in late October 2018.

Police officer pleads not guilty to stealing snacks

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A police officer who has been accused of stealing snacks at a local gas station pled not guilty to the charges yesterday.

Police officer Koji Maurice Taisacan, 29, through his lawyer, Charles McDonald, pled not guilty before Superior Court Associate Judge Wesley Bogdan.

McDonald waived the formal reading of Taisacan's rights, the charges against Taisacan, and Taisacan's right to a speedy trial.

McDonald also verbally filed a request for discovery for the materials the prosecution has to charge Taisacan with.

Bogdan set a status conference in Taisacan's case on July 17 at 9am.

According to the allegation, Taisacan took candy bars and drinks, with a value of less than $250, from a Shell gas station in Susupe without paying for the items on June 12, 2018. The gas station is owned by Delta Management.

Office of the Attorney General's Robert Glass, who represented the government, said that the charge of theft is punishable by up to five years imprisonment with a fine of $5,000.

Waikiki flood concerns spur push for Hawaii shore protection

HONOLULU (AP)—Hawaii's iconic Waikiki Beach could soon be underwater as rising sea levels caused by climate change overtake its white sand beaches and bustling city streets.

In this June 21, 2017 photo, a puddle of seawater forms behind sandbags at a hotel on Waikiki Beach in Honolulu as record high tides begin to hit the state. AP

Predicting Honolulu will start experiencing frequent flooding within the next 15 to 20 years, state lawmakers are trying to pass legislation that would spend millions for a coastline protection program aimed at defending the city from regular tidal inundations.

The highest tides of recent years have sent seawater flowing across Waikiki Beach and onto roads and sidewalks lining its main thoroughfare, and interactive maps of the Hawaiian Islands show that many parts of the state are expected to be hit by extensive flooding, coastal erosion and loss of infrastructure in coming decades.

That's an alarming scenario for a state where beach tourism is the primary driver of the economy, leading some lawmakers to insist that planning for rising tides should start now.

"The latest data on sea level rise is quite scary and it's accelerating faster than we ever thought possible," said state Rep. Chris Lee, a Democrat and lead author of a bill calling for the creation and implementation of the shoreline protection plan. The project would focus on urban Honolulu but act as a pilot program for other coastal communities around the state.

While Hawaii is rarely subjected to direct hurricane hits, Lee's bill says warmer oceans will increase that risk by creating "more hurricanes of increasing intensity"—and estimates the impact of a major hurricane making landfall at $40 billion.

"The loss of coastal property and infrastructure, increased cost for storm damage and insurance, and loss of life are inevitable if nothing is done, which will add a significant burden to local taxpayers, the state's economy, and way of life," says Lee's bill, which is similar to action taken by New York City after a storm surge from Superstorm Sandy led to $19 billion in damage in 2012.

The Hawaii measure proposes sinking $4 million into the program's development over the next two years. The bill also seeks more research into a carbon tax that might raise funds and lower the state's dependence on fossil fuels.

Lee said urban areas such as Waikiki are often "built in such a way that it forms a protective barrier against the kind of storm events that are inevitable."

But in more rural areas, he said, new construction could be restricted close to shore "to preserve dune systems and build in a lot of natural solutions that are much more cost effective and provide a much more resilient result than simply building out concrete infrastructure or anything of the sort."

In a state dominated by Democrats that is regularly at the vanguard of U.S. efforts to address climate issues, Lee said the legislation proved popular. A version of the bill has passed both chambers of Hawaii's Legislature. House and Senate leaders will convene in the coming weeks to discuss final changes before sending the bill to Gov. David Ige, a Democrat. His office has declined comment on whether he will sign it.

The bill is moving forward two years after a state-mandated sea level rise adaptation report was made public to act as a guideline for future legislative action and planning.

Research included in the report suggests Hawaii will see a 3-foot (0.9 meters) rise in ocean levels by the end of this century. It predicts that more than 6,000 of the state's buildings and 20,000 people across all of Hawaii's islands will experience chronic flooding. Dozens of miles of roadways, utility infrastructure and beaches will be washed away, the report said. The state's ports and low-laying airports are also highly vulnerable.

The report was updated in September to included newly published research warning that previous estimates of inundation areas in Hawaii were underestimated by 35% to 54%.

University of Hawaii researcher Tiffany Anderson, who led the study, said traditional sea level forecasts use what is known as the "bathtub model" to measure where water will rise and flood land. But she was surprised by the dramatic increase revealed when she factored in more variables such as beach erosion and wave energy fluctuations, which are not used in traditional climate change flooding predictions.

"We've long suspected processes like shoreline erosion, waves overtopping and inundation would be additional factors for Hawaii," Anderson said. "We found out it covers a lot more land ... I wasn't expecting such a large increase due to these other two processes."

State Rep. Nicole Lowen, a bill backer and Democrat, said people hoping to build near the coast should already be wary.

"It would make sense already to say, 'If we know this is a sea level rise inundation area, then why would we permit a new structure,'" said Lowen, who was the lead author of separate legislation that would have changed construction permitting standards across the state.

That measure died when it was referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee and not scheduled for a hearing.

"I think sea level rise and climate change impacts globally are going to have a huge disruptive effect on economies," Lowen said. "And having an economy that's so heavily based on tourism and so easily impacted by something like the cost of oil rising, for example, it's not resilient."

KHS marks 15 batches of alumni

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kagman High School celebrated 15 years with their alumni last week, coinciding with their annual Cultural Day celebration.

"For as long as I've known KHS, they've always had a Cultural Day," said KHS principal Staffler. "It is our 15th year of graduates, so we are also celebrating 15 years of alumni."

Staffler said the mini festival at the KHS campus last Thursday morning from 10am to 2:30pm celebrated the different cultures on island, not just indigenous culture but also LGBTQ, pop, and many more subcultures.

"It's a way for our students to showcase their talents and celebrate cultures as well as allow them to have something to look forward to in the spring," she noted.

The festival also celebrated the 15 batches of alumni that have already graduated.

KHS graduated their first class in 2003, while the school itself was established around 2000.

The KHS Cultural Day celebration is its largest event and is the only event that is open to the public. Other schools have similar celebrations and have extended an invitation for KHS to join.

Staffler noted that KHS reciprocated the invitation by inviting Marianas High School and Saipan Southern High School to the Cultural day celebration. They also invited neighboring Chacha Oceanview Middle School as well as dance groups.

KHS students all participated in planning the mini-festival, involving about eight tents and over five vendors, all of whom were selected and negotiated with through KHS students.

Staffler added that the students raised the funds for the celebration as well. All in all, she noted that the students involved with the planning raised $1,300.

"…[This] gives the students something to work toward to and to collaborate on. They work on organizing the event that has so many logistical parts," she said.

OAG: Testimony not influenced by suggestive interview techniques

The Office of the Attorney General is opposing a motion to exclude the testimony of a female minor who was allegedly sexually abused by a 28-year-old man.

Assistant attorney general Frances T. Demapan said the issue as to whether or not pretrial investigative techniques influenced a child witness' memory "is a question of reliability, which speaks to the witness's credibility, not competency to testify."

"Such issues should be presented to the trier of fact for a determination and should not require an evidentiary hearing held in advance of trial," said Demapan in the government's request to deny Peter Orren Aldan's motion to exclude the testimony of the child.

Aldan, through counsel, claims the girl's testimony was a result of suggestive or coercive interview techniques.

Demapan said Aldan has failed to make an initial showing that the girl's memory may have been tainted through suggestive or coercive interview tactics.

The prosecutor said a detective follow-up interview with the child's mother, less than three hours after the incident, also fails to show the use of any suggestive or coercive interviewing techniques.

According to a police report, the mother stated that she walked in on Aldan on the bed with her daughter last Jan. 4. The mother said she saw Aldan pull his hand off the girl's pants, so she raised her voice, asking him what he was doing. The mother said her child told her that Aldan touched her inappropriately. Aldan denied the allegation. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Learn about the life of birds in the Marianas

This Thursday, April 25, scientists from the Marianas Avifauna Conservation Project will be talking about the life of birds in the Marianas and how to help conserve them.

Hosted by the Asia-Pacific Academy of Sciences, Science Education, and Environmental Management and in cooperation with the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife, the presentation by visiting MAC group scientists at the American Memorial Park auditorium will start at 5pm.

The division—an office within the Department of Lands and Natural Resources—started the MAC Project in 2004.

It is intended to provide the birdlife of the Marianas archipelago with the best possible chances for long-term survival, with the objectives of preserving, maintaining, and establishing self-sustaining populations of native birds secure from the threat of the brown tree snake.

To address this threat, the division has asked institutions within the Association of Zoos and Aquariums community for assistance with long-term conservation efforts aimed at protecting native avifauna on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

In Thursday's talk, APASEEM and the MAC group are partnering with the American Memorial Park for a public discussion regarding the uniqueness of the birdlife in the CNMI and to share the work that is being done here by the MAC Project.

The mid-1980s saw the brown tree snake either extirpate or drive to extinction nine of 12 species of forest bird in Guam. Almost 20 years later the U.S. Department of the Interior determined that Saipan may support an "incipient" population of this invasive predator.

In 2005, DFW, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the AZA determined that preemptive action was necessary for the CNMI's birdlife to avoid the fate that befell Guam. That's how the MAC Project came to be.

The MAC Project's endeavors are two-fold:

1) the maintenance of captive populations (which serve as genetic reserves) of the CNMI's native and endemic forest bird species at AZA-affiliated institutions in the U.S. mainland; and

2) the establishment of satellite populations of these bird species on islands in the Mariana archipelago that are deemed safe from brown tree snakes.

Captive breeding programs at participating zoos in the U.S. mainland have thus far experienced success with the Mariana fruit dove, the white-throated ground dove, and the golden white-eye.

Also, satellite populations of bridled white-eyes, golden white-eyes, and Mariana fruit doves have successfully been established on Sarigan.

In both endeavors, however, there is more work ahead of the MAC Project.

Dr. Deidre Fontenot and Hannah Bailey, representing the MAC Project group, will provide an update on the program's successes and challenges.

Like all APASEEM gatherings, everyone is invited to attend and ask questions. Additional program information is available by visiting the Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/PacificBirdConservation.

For more information about APASEEM, visit our website at http://www.apaseem.org. ***(PR)***

PAUL RADLEY/CNMI DFW
Scientists from the Marianas Avifauna Conservation Project will be talking about the life of birds in the Marianas and how to help conserve them.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
In 2005, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums determined that preemptive action was necessary for the CNMI's birdlife to avoid the fate that befell Guam.

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Good Friday 2019

Free healthy snacks and water are handed out to pilgrims who were making the ritual Good Friday trek up Mt. Tapochau.

JON PEREZ

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang helps hand out snacks at the booth of the Saipan Mayor's Office, which was stationed along the way up Mt. Tapochau last Good Friday.

JON PEREZ

Members of the United Filipino Organizations get ready to hand out free food as they man the group's booth, which was stationed along the way up Mt. Tapochau last Good Friday.

JON PEREZ

Members manning the booth for the Couples for Christ pause for a souvenir photo last Good Friday.

JON PEREZ

Bishop Ryan Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa blesses the giant cross before it is brought up to the peak of Mt. Tapochau.

JON PEREZ

Bishop Ryan Jimenez reads the Bible as the cross is blessed.

ERWIN ENCINRARES

Several hundred people join the 2019 pilgrimage scaling Mt. Tapochau.

ERWIN ENCINARES

Matson support in Guam/Micronesia totaled $357K in 2018

GUAM—Matson contributed a total of $3.6 million in cash and in-kind donations to more than 850 charitable organizations and non-profit programs in 2018, including $357,000 in support for 96 organizations in Guam and Micronesia.

Cash contributions to Guam organizations, including funds directed by employees through the company's matching gift programs, totaled more than $167,000 in 2018, while the value of donated services and equipment added up to more than $190,000.

"Matson considers itself a lifeline to the communities it serves, and with that comes a special responsibility," said Matt Cox, chairman and CEO. "In addition to being a reliable supply chain provider, Matson is committed to supporting local organizations that improve the quality of life in our communities."

Some of Matson's larger cash contributions in the region last year included $10,868 to American Red Cross-NMI Chapter to support its disaster response efforts; $10,000 to University of Guam, Guam Community College, Palau Community College, College of Micronesia, and Northern Marianas College, part of a five-year $50,000 commitment providing scholarships at each of these institutions in recognition of Matson's 20 years of service to Guam/CNMI; $10,000 to the Micronesian Games Organizing Committee to support its regional event in Yap; $5,000 to Palau Red Cross to support disaster preparedness programs; $3,000 to American Red Cross-Guam to support disaster preparedness programs; and $3,000 to Special Olympics Guam in support of its year-round programs and annual games event.

Matson helps ship relief goods to Saipan in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018. Photo courtesy of Jose T. Quan of Ginen Marianas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Matson's in-kind contributions in the region in 2018 included more than $125,000 in shipments of relief materials and supplies for various organizations to aid recovery from Super Typhoon Yutu on Saipan and Tinian, and multiple shipments of materials to Yap for the Micronesian Games Organizing Committee.

Matson focuses its community support on local programs providing vital health care and human services; youth development / recreation; disaster preparedness and recovery; education; cultural and environmental preservation; the arts; agriculture and nutrition; and maritime safety.

Detailed information on Matson's community support activities in 2018 is available in *Manifest*, Matson's annual giving report, posted online at: https://www.matson.com/community/index.html.

Founded in 1882, Matson is a leading provider of ocean transportation and logistics services in Hawaii, Alaska, and Guam, and to other island economies in Micronesia.

Matson also operates a premium, expedited service from China to Southern California and provides services to Okinawa, Japan and various islands in the South Pacific.

The company's fleet of owned and chartered vessels includes containerships, combination container and roll-on/roll-off ships and custom-designed barges.

Matson Logistics, established in 1987, extends the geographic reach of Matson's transportation network throughout the continental U.S.

For more information, visit www.matson.com. ***(PR)***

Anti-sexual violence walk on April 24; Family Fun Day on April 27

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence is inviting the community to take part in the Walk & Roll Against Sexual Violence on Wednesday, April 24, 2019, in San Roque and the S.A.F.E. Jamboree on Saturday, April 27, 2019.

Registration for the Walk & Roll will start at 5pm at Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School with the walk starting at 5:30pm. The first 100 individuals to register will also receive a free Sexual Assault Awareness Month 2019 T-shirt.

Walk & Roll participants are also encouraged to create signs or banners to help spread awareness on Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is this April, and on sexual violence and/or to show support for victims and survivors.

This year's theme for the U.S. and CNMI is "I Ask," which stresses the importance of consent in ending sexual violence.

The next event is the annual S.A.F.E. Jamboree, which will feature family-friendly entertainment and activities, including music and dance performances, arts and crafts booths, a bounce house, other child-friendly games, and other activities. The event will also feature exhibits by community agencies and programs.

The S.A.F.E. Jamboree will be from 11am to 4pm on April 27, at Garapan Central Park. S.A.F.E. stands for Safe, Aware, Free and Empowered; the aim of the event is to connect the community to a better understanding of sexual violence and learn about available resources.

In addition, NMCADSV will be giving out 200 SAAM 2019 T-shirts, along with other prizes to participants. There will also be a free raffle throughout the event.

For more information, contact NMCADSV at (670) 234-3878 or email info@endviolencenmi.org.

Also, if you or someone you know is experiencing sexual violence, call 911 for emergency assistance or call the 24 hour and confidential Victim Hotline at 234-5100. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority
2nd Floor Rm. 216, Marianas Business Plaza, Susupe, Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 664-2682; Fax: (670) 664-2692; Email: alfreda.camacho@gov.mp

Office of the Governor
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) would like to notify the general public that COTA, has amended its 4-Year Federal-Aid Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

A copy of the plan can be obtained at the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority. Written comments must be submitted directly to the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority, Suite 216, Marianas Business Plaza, Susupe, Saipan or via email to: alfreda.camacho@gov.mp no later than May 16, 2019, 2:00 pm.

Any questions, please contact Mr. Diego Songsong, COTA Community Planner, at (670)664-2682.
The following are listed in the TIP:

I. Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority (COTA) Amended Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)
PROJECTS FUNDED BY: U.S. Department of Transportation

DISTRICT	VILLAGE	ROUTE NO.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF WORK	FY 2017 FEDERAL	FY 2018 FEDERAL	FY 2019 FEDERAL	FY 2020 FEDERAL
	SAIPAN	ALL	COTA Administrative Building & Maintenance Facility	PE Design	$224,000.00			
				Construction			$3,500,000.00	
				CM			$590,000.00	
	SAIPAN	ALL	Purchase of Twelve (12) Medium-Duty ADA Compliant Mobility Equipped Transit Bus for the Fixed Route				$2,162,292.00	
	SAIPAN		Purchase of four (4) ADA Compliant Mobility Equipped Van for the Demand Response				$399,980.00	
	SAIPAN		Supply, Installation of Bus Stop Signboard and Construction of COTA Transit (Bus) Pads	Construction	$120,000.00			$30,000.00
	SAIPAN	ALL	Supply, Installation of thirty seven (37) Fixed Route Bus Stop Shelters	Construction			$1,009,500.00	
TOTAL OBLIGATION					**$344,000.00**		**$7,661,772.00**	**$30,000.00**

/S/ Alfreda P. Camacho, Special Assistant for Public Transportation

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
P.O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. Nos. (670) 664-4282 Fax (670) 235-5131

INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-19-018
Koa Lane 6-Inch Waterline Project

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Koa Ln Waterline Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general installation of a new 6-inch waterline main and 2-inch service line; connection to the existing water main; installation of gate valve assembly, flush hydrants, air release valves, and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by ***Saipan PL 19-23, 19-24, 19-27 and 20-26***.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **240 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $150.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **April 22, 2019 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-19-018, Koa Lane Waterline Project"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on May 10, 2019**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered**.

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on April 23, 2019** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater Acting Chief Engineer via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org, Birhen Martinez, Water Division, Junior Engineer via email birhen.martinez@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Support Assistant via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

CUC IS AN AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Decision to detain more cynical and cruel

A new ruling by the Department of Justice ordering thousands more asylum seekers to be detained for the duration of their application process—which can take years—is another reminder of two deplorable aspects of the Trump administration's immigration policy: its obsessive efforts to radically reduce immigration, and its willingness to trample any notion of human decency by jailing people who arrive at the border asking for help.

Atty. Gen. William Barr's ruling reversed a 2005 decision by the Justice Department's Board of Immigration Appeals that allowed asylum-seekers to be released into the United States while waiting for their immigration court proceedings. Relying on the 2018 Rodriguez decision by the Supreme Court that immigration detainees do not have a right to a bond hearing, Barr held that immigration law requires some asylum-seekers who have passed the initial threshold for consideration—by persuading an asylum officer that they have a "credible fear" of persecution in their home countries—to be jailed while their cases play out.

The mandatory detention applies only to adults apprehended between ports of entry, and not minors and families. By the time you read this, legal challenges have likely been filed, joining pending court action in the Rodriguez case over whether the statutes requiring detention are constitutional.

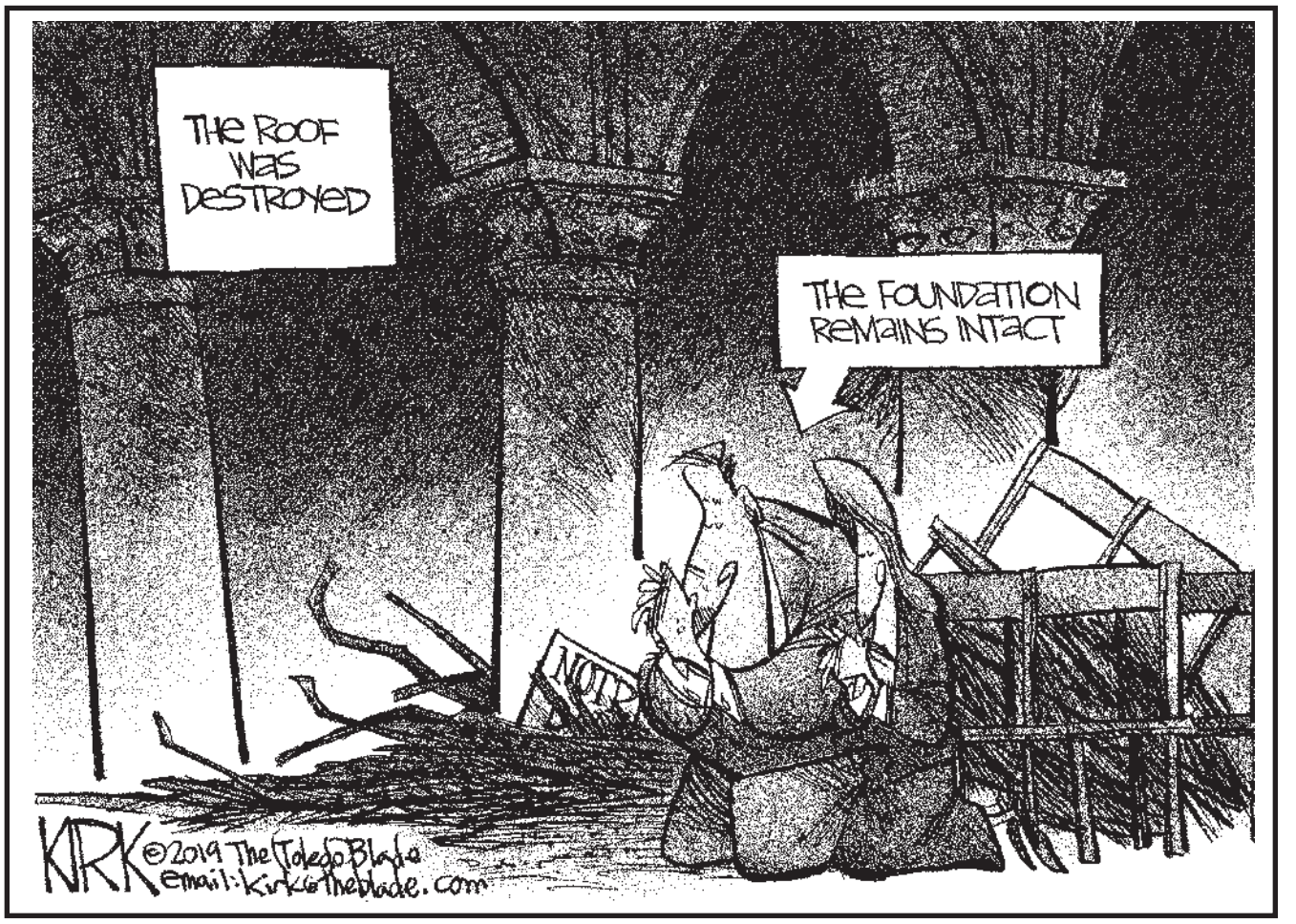
Putting aside the legal arguments, it is unconscionable that the U.S. government detains people indefinitely without offering a chance for a bond hearing—especially when they are asking for our government's help and are not accused of any crime other than the misdemeanor of crossing the border illegally. Such incarcerations run contrary to our notion that the government should not deprive people of their freedom without due cause and court oversight. They also presume, contrary to reality, that people seeking asylum are all criminals or scam artists.

The order is of a piece with such previous Trump administration actions as slashing the number of refugees allowed to resettle here, restricting asylum eligibility, requiring all asylum applications to be made at legal points of entry and some applicants to wait in Mexico for a decision, and slow-walking the applications that it does accept. Barr, at the request of the Department of Homeland Security, delayed the effective date of his new rule for 90 days "so that DHS may conduct necessary operational planning." That's bureaucratese for saying there's no room in the existing detention system and the government needs time to add more internment camps.

It is true that the flow of migrants, mainly families, from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador has created a humanitarian problem at the U.S.-Mexico border.

But it's a problem that can be handled in better ways than saying, "We're full," as Trump did recently, and then ignoring people's right to petition for asylum. Conditions in those northern triangle countries of Central America are unsettled and dangerous, with gangs controlling territory and terrorizing people within it, criminal justice systems incapable of protecting people and neighborhoods, and endemic, worsening poverty, particularly in agricultural areas wracked by drought and other byproducts of climate change. Some of those conditions may make people eligible for asylum and

See DECISION on Next Page



Notre Dame design contest raises eyebrows

By BLAIR KAMIN
Chicago Tribune

Blair Kamin is a Tribune critic. Readers may email him at bkamin@chicagotribune.com.

The French, who know a thing or two about the bold reinvention of architectural landmarks (consider I.M. Pei's once-despised, now-iconic Louvre Pyramid), have announced an international design competition to restore or redesign the destroyed spire of Notre Dame cathedral.

Is that a good idea or a publicity stunt? At first glance, I'd say, it's more of the latter than the former.

The contest, announced Wednesday, appears to offer French President Emmanuel Macron a convenient way to divert attention from the politically damaging sight of the "Yellow Vest" protests that have engulfed Paris' streets.

The timing and scope of the contest also seem ill-advised.

Job one at this stage is to ensure the cathedral's structural stability, not to replace its architectural exclamation point.

And if French officials are going to hold such a competition, why limit it to the spire? Why not also include the replacement of the cathedral's destroyed timber roof?

Rushing to heal architectural wounds is risky business that can have negative long-term consequences, as we know from the bland row of glassy skyscrapers that replaced the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

It is even riskier to tweak a masterpiece. So much can go wrong. Why not just rebuild Notre Dame exactly as it was?

But things really aren't that simple, and not just because it will be impossible to replace materials of the original building, like the tall, sturdy beams of oak that undergirded its steeply-pitched roof.

Since the first stone was laid in 1163, Notre Dame has been tweaked continuously, reflecting changing tastes and technologies. The cathedral we see today is not a frozen-in-time monument of the Gothic master builders. It has evolved, shaped by changing tastes, technologies, and circumstances.

The spire that toppled Monday was "only" about 150 years old, a legacy of a restoration carried out in the mid-19th Century by the French architect and theorist Eugene Viollet-le-Duc.

His spire (300 feet tall, its wood frame sheathed in lead) was once accused of being outlandishly personal and romantically inventive—unfaithful, in short, to the original design. Yet without it, Notre Dame seems heart-breakingly incomplete.

The cathedral's complex history raises a fraught question: If the 19th century "improved" Notre Dame, then why can't we, in the 21st century, rebuild the cathedral using our own advanced art and technology?

That was the gist of French Prime Minster Edouard Philippe's remarks in announcing the competition Wednesday.

"The international competition will allow us to ask the question of whether we should even recreate the spire as it was conceived by Viollet-le-Duc," he told reporters. "Or if, as is often the case in the evolution of heritage, we should endow Notre Dame with a new spire."

To get a firmer grip on Viollet-le-Duc's design, I called Kevin Murphy, a Vanderbilt University art history professor whose 2000 book "Memory and Modernity" explores the architect's restoration of a Romanesque church in France's Burgundy region.

Viollet-le-Duc's Notre Dame spire, Murphy told me, replaced one that was in bad condition and was taken down in the 1780s. He was unsure if that spire was the original.

With the new spire, Murphy said, Viollet-le-Duc sought to achieve a sky-piercing exterior expression of the awe-inspiring Gothic verticality that may not have been achievable when the building was constructed in the 12th and 13th centuries.

"It was about height and lightness, also the position of the cathedral in the city, marking that important institution," Murphy said.

For Viollet-le-Duc, he went on, "the church was not only a religious institution....He promoted the Gothic as a national achievement rather than as an achievement of the faith."

In addition to shoring up the structure of the once-crumbling cathedral, Murphy explained, Viollet-le-Duc cleared out aged buildings around it. That step enhanced Notre Dame's monumental presence, making it more visible to tourists, whose ranks were growing in the mid-19th century.

So what does Murphy think about the possibility that Viollet-le-Duc's spire might be replaced with a different design?

"I'm attached to his work," Murphy replied. On the other hand, "the building as it exists has a very long history. There's nothing pure about it. It's been altered and restored over the course of many centuries...It might be interesting to see a proposal for a spire that was compatible with the building but at the same time spoke to our own time the way Viollet-le-Duc's did."

Then, Murphy added, "It could be horrible."

Indeed it could. The stakes here—aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual—are enormous.

Political calculations should not drive the fate of Notre Dame. Nor should brazen architectural adventurism. It is necessary to move ahead, and even to consider new solutions, but with the care, intelligence and sense of stewardship demanded by one of the world's great landmarks.

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3 ways to protect your hard-earned cash from creditors

By JORDAN SUNDELL
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business and real-estate law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including JZ Group. His columns—focused mainly on real estate and small business—are published every other Tuesday. jsundell@jzgroupinc.com

You've worked your entire life to buy a home, fund your retirement account, and put cash in the bank. But what happens if you cause an accident that seriously hurts someone? What if you guaranteed a loan for a child's business that ultimately failed?

These, and other, scenarios happen to people every day. When it does, those unlucky people face the very real risk of watching a lifetime of work evaporate in front of them. But there are steps that you can take to make it harder—much harder—on creditors.

One option is to sell the property to a friend using a sale-and-leaseback agreement. Under this arrangement, the debtor sells the property to a friend and the friend leases the property back to the debtor. But the friend doesn't pay for the property. Instead, the friend signs a promissory note with payments equal to the lease payments and then a balloon payment at the very end.

This strategy works well because it is simple and because it converts a house (which is a desirable asset for a debt collector) into a promissory note (which is a less appetizing asset).

But you'll want to be careful: The transfer price should be around the market value and you'll need to pay appropriate taxes, including the CNMI's real-estate transfer withholding tax.

Another option is equity stripping. This approach involves several methods all working toward the same goal—reducing a person's ownership in an asset by larding it up with debt.

What is equity? To explain, let me give you an example. Imagine that a person has a house worth $200,000 and no mortgage. Their equity is $200,000. If, by contrast, the house had a $100,000 mortgage on it, then their equity would be $100,000 (the house's value minus the debt still owed).

Equity is important because when a bank or some other creditor forecloses on a property, they are not actually foreclosing on the property; they are foreclosing on the equity in the property. Thus, the less equity in a property, the less likely a creditor will be to foreclose on it.

How can you strip the equity in your property? In two ways: a bank loan or a paper strip.

Getting a bank loan is great. It puts cash in your pocket and shrinks your equity.

But it has two drawbacks. For one, a bank will seldom give you a loan equal to your equity. If you are lucky, you will get around 80 percent. That leaves 20 percent of your equity for creditors to carve up. For another, getting a loan means having to pay it back with interest. That can get expensive. Normally people deal with that by investing the loan proceeds. Sometimes that investment goes up; sometimes it doesn't.

That brings us to a paper strip. Here, the person will recruit a friend to act like a lender. The person and the friend will then sign a mortgage saying that the friend lent money equal to the full equity in the property and then record that mortgage with the Recorder's Office. It's basically a sham transaction, but unless someone investigates thoroughly, the mortgage will look legitimate and fool a creditor into thinking that there's no equity in the property worth pursuing.

A third option is to create an irrevocable spendthrift trust. It can be an excellent vehicle for sheltering money by moving it away from someone with heavy debts or a high risk of being sued and toward someone with few debts and a low risk of being sued.

Take an example. Let's say that a father owns $1 million in assets but expects to have problems with creditors in the near future. He could set up an irrevocable trust and then designate his children as the beneficiaries. The money would no longer be his, so when creditors came a-knocking, the money would be safely squirreled away with the children.

What are the key features of an irrevocable spendthrift trust?

To protect the grantor's assets, the trust must be irrevocable, meaning that once the trust begins the grantor cannot change their mind and dissolve it. Irrevocability is important because only irrevocable trusts protect against creditors.

Why? Because the grantor no longer owns or controls the trust funds. In other words, the trust funds are no longer part of the grantor's assets. And so, even if a creditor could get a judgment ordering the grantor to turn over the trust's assets, the grantor cannot do so because they no longer own or control the assets.

To protect the beneficiary's assets, the trust should usually have a spendthrift provision. This provision prevents beneficiaries from transferring their right to receive trust funds to anyone else until the beneficiary actually receives the money. This prohibition comes in handy when a beneficiary has a debt collector breathing down their neck. In that case, the trust can often delay paying the beneficiary anything into perpetuity. That threat can encourage a debt collector to take less than what they are owed in exchange for the trust speeding up payment.

A warning though: If the grantor is also the beneficiary, then a spendthrift provision usually won't protect the grantor's share of the trust income and principal. But there are ways address that, which we will discuss in a future article.

To learn more about protecting your assets, consider speaking with an attorney with asset-protection experience. But be careful: Most attorneys don't have much experience in this area.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For specific cases, consult a lawyer.

Musical sounds gone forever

By MICHAEL SCOTT CUTHBERT
Los Angeles Times

Michael Scott Cuthbert is an associate professor of music and the faculty director of digital humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Like so many on Monday, I tuned in to the news of the fire in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. As others watched flames consume a place of devotion, a symbol of resistance through revolution or an architectural marvel, as a medieval music historian, I mourned for the unrecorded sounds that will now never be heard again.

For more than 100 years beginning in the late 12th century, some of the greatest advances in European music were entwined with the phases of construction of the cathedral. The first known pieces for three and four independent voices with rhythmic indications—the direct predecessors of Christian hymns and holiday carols, to say nothing of popular music today—were said to have been composed, as a 13th century author writes, for the use in "the great church of the Blessed Virgin in Paris."

Two composers whose names survive, Master Leonin and Perotin the Great, rewrote the entire year's liturgy to take advantage of Notre Dame's resonant possibilities. Around 1198, Perontin stretched segments of chant into monumental works of floating voices above a sustained bass that, as described by Umberto Eco, "filled the naves ... and did not cease for the whole time that it took a speaker to repeat 12 'Ave Maria's' in a slow and cadenced voice."

We would not know of Leonin and Perotin at all were it not for a single essay written by an unnamed source nearly a century later. Musicologists today call the writer Anonymous IV. He or she seems to have been a stranger to Paris and thus noticed details of the city's soundscape. Anonymous IV described how the Parisians wrote down rhythm, the squabbles among clergy and what people were singing in Notre Dame. Yet the one aspect of medieval music that the writer did not capture, for there was no way to, was what music historians want most to know: What did the music actually sound like?

Anonymous IV would have needed not just the vocabulary of modern acousticians but the technologies to measure the resonances of the space in which it was performed. Maybe then we would be able to reconstruct how changes in its architecture over the nearly 200 years it took to build Notre Dame changed the sound.

We still lack the technologies to re-create the sound of historic spaces that have been transformed, or destroyed. But recent advances in recording, signal processing and artificial intelligence are bringing us closer.

The stakes for rediscovering past sounds are great. What sounds consonant or harmonious to us today was shaped by the works of these composers 800 years ago—and those pieces of music were informed by the acoustics of the space for which they were written. A space that is now lost.

Regarded alongside the ruined stained glass, the charred artworks or even the memory of countless masses, the loss of Notre Dame Cathedral as a historic musical space may seem insignificant. But the art was once photographed and might be reconstructed at least in part; the stories of baptisms and requiems might survive through retellings. But Notre Dame's sound—a vital part of the history of music, thought to be hidden but perhaps someday to be rediscovered—may just have slipped beyond our grasp, to be lost forever.

DECISION

From Page 10

some may not, but they have a right to ask.

The order to detain thousands of asylum-seekers primarily to deter others from asking for help is cynical and cruel, especially when studies have found that the vast majority of asylum-seekers who are released into the United States show up for their hearings, and that in recent years the government winds up rejecting only about a third of the requests (though that share likely has increased under the Trump administration).

A recent report by a Homeland Security advisory panel, while flawed in many ways, included a reasonable idea: Create several "regional processing centers" to shelter migrants more quickly and safely while they are screened for medical problems, given credible-fear interviews where requested and evaluated for the risk they pose. That dovetails with a suggestion by the Migration Policy Institute that the same asylum officers who handle the credible-fear interviews be empowered to grant asylum to applicants who meet the legal requirements. Currently, all those who pass the interview are referred to immigration court for a final decision; reserving the court for appeals of denials would speed up the entire system.

Both ideas are worth considering. And they prove that there are better and more humane ways of dealing with asylum-seekers than treating them as an invading horde, as Trump has done, and reneging on our legal and international obligations.

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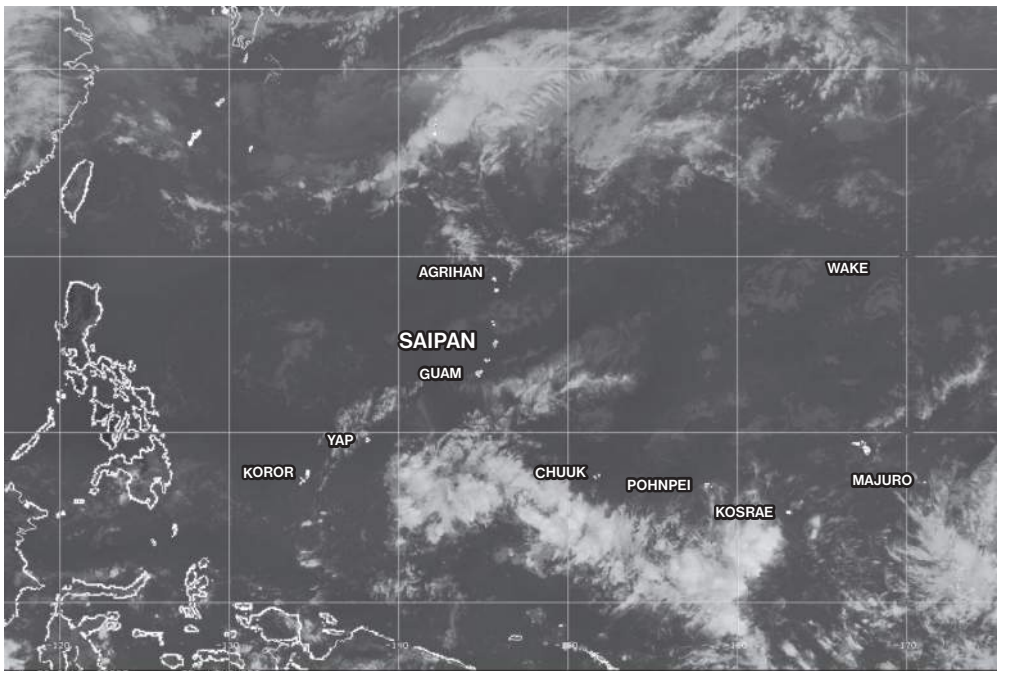
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
89° 78°	89° 78°	89° 78°	89° 78°	89° 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:35 AM, MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate trade winds and combined seas of 4 to 6 feet will persist through Wednesday. By Wednesday night, seas are expected to build to between 5 and 7 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Yap	Thunderstorms	89° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	68° / 57°
Beijing	Rain	64° / 46°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	82° / 75°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	84° / 71°
London	Mostly Sunny	70° / 52°
Los Angeles	Sunny	80° / 59°
Manila	Sunny	99° / 81°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	70° / 48°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 70°
New York	Mostly Sunny	72° / 58°
Osaka	Showers	75° / 66°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 57°
Busan	Rain	66° / 57°
Rome	Thunderstorms	66° / 55°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	84° / 59°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	69° / 53°
Seoul	Cloudy	75° / 57°
Tokyo	Showers	70° / 63°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	81° / 63°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:32 AM	LOW TIDE	1.00
9:28 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.85
4:47 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.21
11:43 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.82

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:58 AM	6:32 PM
Wednesday	5:57 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	5:57 AM	6:33 PM
Friday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM
Saturday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:56 AM	10:12 PM
Wednesday	-	9:46 AM	11:05 PM
Thursday	-	10:38 AM	11:56 PM
Friday	-	11:29 AM	-
Saturday	12:44 AM	12:20 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 1, 2019

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:56am	Daily
UA105	6:25pm	7:05pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 3, 5, 7
7C3451	3:30am	6:30am	4

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	1:35am	5:20am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	8:50pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA117/1939:15am		10:40pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:20am	11:40am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:35am	8:25am	1
UO43	5:50am	8:40am	3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:12am	Daily
UA104	4:50pm	5:31pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	3

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 5, 6
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
OZ625	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ625	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	3:55pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	9:45pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:25pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/174	11:30pm	8:12am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	00:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:25pm	1:20am+1	7
UO42	9:25pm	4:20am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	10:45pm	8:12am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

AP sources: US to sanction nations for importing Iranian oil

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Trump administration is poised to tell five nations, including allies Japan, South Korea and Turkey, that they will no longer be exempt from U.S. sanctions if they continue to import oil from Iran, officials said Sunday.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo plans to announce on Monday that the administration will not renew sanctions waivers for the five countries when they expire on May 2, three U.S. officials said. The others are China and India.

It was not immediately clear if any of the five would be given additional time to wind down their purchases or if they would be subject to U.S. sanctions on May 3 if they do not immediately halt imports of Iranian oil.

The officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of Pompeo's announcement.

The decision not to extend the waivers, which was first reported by The Washington Post, was finalized on Friday by President Donald Trump, according to the officials. They said it is intended to further ramp up pressure on Iran by strangling the revenue it gets from oil exports.

The administration granted eight oil sanctions waivers when it re-imposed sanctions on Iran after Trump pulled the U.S. out of the landmark 2015 nuclear deal. They were granted in part to give those countries more time to find alternate energy sources but also to prevent a shock to global oil markets from the sudden removal of Iranian crude.

U.S. officials now say they do not expect any significant reduction in the supply of oil given production increases by other countries, including the U.S. itself and Saudi Arabia.

Since November, three of the eight—Italy, Greece and Taiwan—have stopped importing oil from Iran. The other five, however, have not, and have lobbied for their waivers to be extended.

NATO ally Turkey has made perhaps the most public case for an extension, with senior officials telling their U.S. counterparts that Iranian oil is critical to meeting their country's energy needs. They have also made the case that as a neighbor of Iran, Turkey cannot be expected to completely close its economy to Iranian goods.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo answers a question during a news conference on Friday, April 19, 2019, at the Department of State in Washington. AP

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Law lets some hospitals seize tax refunds

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—A South Carolina law originally written to help state and local governments collect debts is being used by some state hospitals to seize tax refunds from people with past-due medical bills. A report on the practice in Sunday's Post and Courier says much of the money flows to some of the region's largest health care companies. The newspaper reported that such health organizations took at least $92.9 million in more than 172,000 seizures to pay off past-due medical bills in 2017. It also noted the burden the program can place on lower-income people with medical debts. These little-known mechanisms, the Setoff Debt Program and another that collects citizens' wages, allows select hospitals to use the Revenue Department as their debt collector if it can show ties to state or county governments. The report says those ties, however, are often tenuous. It says private companies have come to dominate this program, which was intended to help governments settle overdue bills and recoup taxpayer dollars. In fact, money collected by the hospital systems now dwarfs what local governments collect. Patients foot the bill for that work, with as much as a $50 fee tacked onto their debt. Hartley Powell, director of the Revenue Department said the Setoff Debt program helps government entities "better fund essential public services." Hospitals that don't qualify for the program say it gives their competitors an unfair advantage.

Average US price of gas spikes 13 cents per gallon, to $2.91

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—The average U.S. price of regular-grade gasoline surged 13 cents a gallon (3.8 liters) over the past two weeks, to $2.91. Industry analyst Trilby Lundberg of the Lundberg Survey says one of the reasons for the spike is an increase in crude oil costs. Lundberg says Sunday that prices at the pump have jumped 25 cents over the past month and 60 cents over the past 14 weeks. The highest average price in the nation is $4.04 a gallon in the San Francisco Bay Area. The lowest average is $2.45 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The average price of diesel rose 4 cents over the past two weeks, to $3.14.

Telehealth company sues Indiana for ban on online eye exams

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—A Chicago-based telehealth company that provides online eye testing is challenging Indiana's ban on doctors using online vision tests to issue prescriptions for corrective lenses. Visibly, formerly known as Opternative, filed the lawsuit in Marion County, taking issue with the 2016 measure that was signed into law by then-Gov. Mike Pence, the Indianapolis Business Journal reported . The telehealth law permits doctors to examine patients and prescribe treatments and drugs, but it notably contains exceptions for some categories such as abortion drugs, most opioids and any "ophthalmic device," which includes glasses, contact lenses and low-vision devices. Thirty-nine states allow doctors to conduct vision examinations online. Visibly argues that vision tests and eye prescriptions are not the same as abortion drugs or opioids, and they were incorporated into the ban because of pressure from optometrists and the eyeglasses industry.

Panel to review approval of Boeing 737 Max flight controls

CHICAGO (AP)—A global team of experts next week will begin reviewing how the Boeing 737 Max's flight control system was approved by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration.

The FAA says experts from nine international civil aviation authorities have confirmed participation in a technical review promised by the agency.

Former National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Chris Hart will lead the group, which also will have experts from the FAA and NASA. They will look at the plane's automated system including the way it interacts with pilots. The group will meet Tuesday and is expected to finish in 90 days.

The Boeing jetliner has been grounded around the world since mid-March after two crashes killed 346 people. Investigators are focusing on anti-stall software that pushed the planes' noses down based on erroneous sensor readings.

In a statement Friday, the FAA said aviation authorities from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, Indonesia, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to help with the work, called a Joint Authorities Technical Review.

The group will evaluate the automated flight control design and determine whether it complies with regulations. It also will decide if changes need to be made in the FAA's approval process.

Chicago-based Boeing is working on a software fix to the planes' anti-stall system, known by its acronym, MCAS. In both an October crash off the coast of Indonesia and a March crash in Ethiopia, a faulty sensor reading triggered MCAS and pushed the plane's nose down, and pilots were unable to recover.

Pilots at U.S. airlines complained that they didn't even know about MCAS until after the October crash. They then received computer training that described the system and how to respond when something goes wrong with it.

On Wednesday, Boeing CEO Dennis Muilenburg said the company completed its last test flight of updated flight-control software. Muilenburg said test pilots flew 120 flights totaling 203 hours with the new software. The company is expected to conduct a crucial certification flight with an FAA test pilot on board soon, possibly next week.

"We are making steady progress toward certification" and returning the Max to service, Muilenburg said as he stood in front of a Max jet at Boeing Field in Seattle.

Muilenburg said he went on a test flight that day and saw the updated software "operating as designed across a range of flight conditions."

In the U.S., United Airlines has removed its 14 Max jets from the schedule until early July, while American, with 24, and Southwest, with 34, are not counting on the planes until August.

It could take longer before foreign airlines can use their Max jets. Regulators outside the U.S. once relied on the FAA's judgment in such matters but have indicated plans to conduct their own reviews this time.

Foreign countries may impose additional requirements, delaying the use of the Max by their carriers.

For example, FAA experts concluded in a draft report that while pilots need training on the anti-stall system, they do not need additional time in flight simulators. Canada's transportation minister said this week, however, that he wants simulator training for Max pilots. Air Canada has 24 Max jets.

Nation

Giuliani says not wrong to take information from Russians

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani insisted there was "nothing wrong" with the president's 2016 campaign taking information from the Russians, as House Democrats pledged stepped-up investigations into campaign misconduct and possible crimes of obstruction detailed in special counsel Robert Mueller's report .

Giuliani called the Trump campaign's effort to get political help from representatives of the Russian government possibly ill-advised but not illegal.

"There's nothing wrong with taking information from Russians," Giuliani said Sunday, referring to a June 2016 Trump Tower meeting involving Trump's son Donald Jr., son-in-law Jared Kushner and former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort and a lawyer linked to Russia. The Trump campaign was seeking harmful information on Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

The Sunday news shows offered the latest back and forth following the long-anticipated release on Thursday of Mueller's 448-page redacted report on his two-year investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Mueller found no evidence of a conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign and made no decision on obstruction of justice.

Giuliani rebutted Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, who said in a statement on Twitter Friday he was "sickened" by the findings in Mueller's report that cited details on how the Trump campaign welcomed political dirt from Russia.

Giuliani said Romney should "stop the bull," saying that accepting negative information about a political opponent is common. "I would have advised, just out of excess of caution, don't do it," he said. Nevertheless, "there's no crime."

Pressed about whether there is a something wrong about using information stolen by foreign adversaries, Giuliani said, "It depends on the stolen material."

Trump, who spent the holiday weekend at his private Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, asserted in tweets Sunday that he had been fully cleared by Mueller's report and that Democrats' continued efforts to investigate him will prove politically costly.

"Despite No Collusion, No Obstruction, The Radical Left Democrats do not want to go on to Legislate for the good of the people, but only to Investigate and waste time. This is costing our Country greatly, and will cost the Dems big time in 2020!" he tweeted.

Mueller explicitly did not exonerate Trump in the report on the question of obstruction, citing in part Justice Department guidelines that a sitting president shouldn't be indicted.

Not ruling out impeachment, Rep. Jerrold Nadler, who chairs the House committee that would hold impeachment hearings, said he remained puzzled why Mueller did not bring charges of criminal conspiracy against those in the Trump Tower meeting.

In this Aug. 1, 2018, file photo, Rudy Giuliani, an attorney for President Donald Trump, speaks in Portsmouth, N.H. President Donald Trump's lawyers are putting the finishing touches on a rebuttal to the forthcoming report by special counsel Robert Mueller. AP

"All you have to prove for conspiracy is that they entered into a meeting of the minds to do something wrong and had one overt act. They entered into a meeting of the minds to attend a meeting to get stolen material on Hillary (Clinton). They went to the meeting. That's conspiracy right there," said Nadler, D-N.Y.

Nadler said it was now up to Congress to investigate after the special counsel said it did not establish enough evidence to bring charges of criminal conspiracy, yet detailed 10 allegations of Trump's attempts to obstruct the Russia investigation that left open whether Trump broke the law.

Asked whether the offenses are impeachable, Nadler told NBC, "If proven, some of this would be impeachable, yes." He said Democrats' current focus is to "go where the evidence leads us."

Nadler has subpoenaed the Justice Department for the full, unredacted report and said Sunday he was adding former White House counsel Don McGahn to the list of people he would call to testify before his committee, along with Mueller and Attorney General William Barr. According to the special counsel's report, McGahn was among the Trump aides who effectively halted Trump's efforts to influence the Russia investigation, rebuffing his demand to set Mueller's firing in motion.

Nadler has said he expects the Justice Department to comply with the subpoena for the full report by May 1, the same day Barr is to testify before a Senate committee and one day before Barr is to appear before Nadler's panel. Nadler summoned Mueller to testify by May 23.

Democratic leaders are under mounting pressure from the party's rising stars and some 2020 presidential contenders, including Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Julian Castro, a former Housing and Urban Development secretary, to start impeachment proceedings.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., is pushing for a step-by-step approach to the House's oversight of Trump and has refused to consider impeachment without public support, including Republicans. Pelosi is convening House Democrats on Monday to assess next steps.

Sen. Mike Lee, a member of the Judiciary Committee, said it would be a "mistake" for Democrats to pursue further investigations that could lead to impeachment proceedings, arguing that the American public won't stand for it after Mueller failed to conclude that crimes had been committed.

"It's time to move on," said Lee, R-Utah.

Giuliani said Trump's legal team was weighing whether it would release a detailed written rebuttal to the Mueller report.

"It may become necessary, whether they go ahead with the hearings or not, whether other issues are raised by different people—there's probably a point at which we'll use it. Right now we think the public debate is playing out about as well as it can," he said.

Accuracy at core of Supreme Court case over census question

WASHINGTON (AP)—Justice Elena Kagan's father was 3 years old when the census taker came to the family's apartment on Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn, New York, on April 10, 1930.

Robert Kagan was initially wrongly listed as an "alien," though he was a native-born New Yorker. The entry about his citizenship status appears to have been crossed out on the census form.

Vast changes in America and technology have dramatically altered the way the census is conducted. But the accuracy of the once-a-decade population count is at the heart of the Supreme Court case over the Trump administration's effort to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census.

The justices are hearing arguments in the case on Tuesday, with a decision due by late June that will allow for printing forms in time for the count in April 2020.

The fight over the census question is the latest over immigration-related issues between Democratic-led states and advocates for immigrants, on one side, and the administration, on the other. The Supreme Court last year upheld President Donald Trump's ban on visitors to the U.S. from several mostly Muslim countries. The court also has temporarily blocked administration plans to make it harder for people to claim asylum and is considering an administration appeal that would allow Trump to end protections for immigrants who were brought to this country as children.

The citizenship question has not been asked on the census form sent to every American household since 1950, and the administration's desire to add it is now rife with political implications and partisan division.

ACROSS THE NATION

Condition of Topeka zookeeper attacked by tiger improving

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP)—The director of the Topeka Zoo says a zookeeper who was attacked by a Sumatran tiger remains in intensive care but her prognosis for recovery is good. The zookeeper was attacked Saturday while in the outdoor tiger habitat of Sanjiv, a 7-year-old male tiger. The Topeka Capital-Journal reports zoo director Brendan Wiley said the zookeeper was talking Saturday night. Wiley said she remained in intensive care Sunday but could be transferred out of the unit soon. The woman has worked at the zoo since 2002 and has several years of experience with tigers. Wiley said the zoo is conducting an investigation and will determine what protocol changes might be needed after talking to the injured employee. The zoo has no plans to euthanize Sanjiv, who was back on display Sunday.

Stolen pickup truck strikes, kills Uber passenger in Oregon

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Portland police say a man driving a stolen pickup truck 100 mph (161 kph) crashed into an SUV, killing an Uber passenger. Police believe the pickup truck driver was under the influence of intoxicants when he collided head-on with the SUV Saturday night. According to police, the Uber passenger sitting in the backseat of the SUV was ejected through the front windshield and died. The driver of the SUV was taken to a hospital with serious injuries. The truck driver was ejected from the vehicle and treated at a nearby hospital. Police say that during the crash, the SUV hit a minivan. A passenger in the minivan was treated for injuries at a hospital. Officers investigating the crash learned the truck was reported stolen earlier in the week.

13 airline passengers taken to hospital after landing

BOSTON (AP)—An official says 16 passengers reported feeling ill on an American Airlines flight from Miami to Boston. Boston Emergency Medical Services' Twitter page says 13 of the ill passengers were taken to the hospital Sunday morning after the plane landed. Massachusetts Port Authority spokeswoman Samantha Decker says the passengers' symptoms appeared mild. She said she didn't have information on what may have caused the illnesses. An American Airlines spokesman said they were part of a student group. He said no other passengers or crew members felt ill. The flight landed at Boston Logan International Airport on Sunday morning.

Police: Peeping Tom suspect with shotgun killed by officer

ATHENS, Ga. (AP)—Police in Georgia have identified an armed man shot to death by one of the officers who responded to a "Peeping Tom" call. The Athens-Clarke County Police Department said in a news release that the man was shot Saturday night. The victim who had made the call identified a suspect and officers went to the man's residence to try to contact him. The release posted on Facebook says one officer fired after the man "brandished a shotgun at the officers." The Atlanta Journal Constitution reports the man was identified Sunday as 63-year-old Carlton Steve Brooks. Athens police have called the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to investigate the shooting. An autopsy has been scheduled. The officer who shot Brooks has been placed on administrative leave in accordance with the department's policy.

Asia

Possible intel failures to be examined in Sri Lanka blasts

AP
Dead bodies of victims lie inside St. Sebastian's Church damaged in blast in Negombo, north of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Sunday, April 21, 2019.

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Police in Sri Lanka said Monday the investigation into the Easter Sunday bombings will examine reports that the intelligence community failed to detect or warn of possible suicide attacks before the violence.

The nine bombings of churches, luxury hotels and other sites was Sri Lanka's deadliest violence since a devastating civil war in the South Asian island nation ended a decade ago. Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara said Monday the death toll, which was 207 late Sunday, had risen overnight but the figure wasn't immediately released.

Two government ministers have alluded to intelligence failures. Telecommunications Minister Harin Fernando tweeted, "Some intelligence officers were aware of this incidence. Therefore there was a delay in action. Serious action needs to be taken as to why this warning was ignored." He said his father had heard of the possibility of an attack as well and had warned him not to enter popular churches.

And Mano Ganeshan, the minister for national integration, said the security officers within his ministry had been warned by their division about the possibility two suicide bombers would target politicians.

Police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekara said the Criminal Investigation Department investigating the blasts will look into the reports.

Defense Minister Ruwan Wijewardena previously described the blasts as a terrorist attack by religious extremists, and police said 13 suspects were arrested, though there was no immediate claim of responsibility. Wijewardena said most of the bombings were believed to have been suicide attacks.

The explosions—mostly in or around Colombo, the capital—collapsed ceilings and blew out windows, killing worshippers and hotel guests in one scene after another of smoke, soot, blood, broken glass, screams and wailing alarms. Victims were carried out of blood-spattered pews.

"People were being dragged out," said Bhanuka Harischandra, of Colombo, a 24-year-old founder of a tech marketing company who was going to the Shangri-La Hotel for a meeting when it was bombed. "People didn't know what was going on. It was panic mode."

He added: "There was blood everywhere."

Most of those killed were Sri Lankans. But the three bombed hotels and one of the churches, St. Anthony's Shrine, are frequented by foreign tourists, and Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry said the bodies of at least 27 foreigners from a variety of countries were recovered.

The U.S. said "several" Americans were among the dead, while Britain, India, China, Japan and Portugal said they, too, lost citizens.

The streets were largely deserted Monday morning, with most shops closed and a heavy deployment of soldiers and police. Stunned clergy and onlookers gathered at St. Anthony's Shrine, looking past the soldiers to the stricken church.

The Sri Lankan government lifted a curfew that had been imposed during the night. But most social media remained blocked Monday after officials said they needed to curtail the spread of false information and ease tension in the country of about 21 million people.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said he feared the massacre could trigger instability in Sri Lanka, and he vowed to "vest all necessary powers with the defense forces" to take action against those responsible.

The Archbishop of Colombo, Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, called on Sri Lanka's government to "mercilessly" punish those responsible "because only animals can behave like that."

The scale of the bloodshed recalled the worst days of Sri Lanka's 26-year civil war, in which the Tamil Tigers, a rebel group from the ethnic Tamil minority, sought independence from the Buddhist-majority country. The Tamils are Hindu, Muslim and Christian.

Sri Lanka, off the southern tip of India, is about 70 percent Buddhist. Scattered incidents of anti-Christian harassment have occurred in recent years, but nothing on the scale of what happened Sunday.

There is also no history of violent Muslim militants in Sri Lanka. However, tensions have been running high more recently between hard-line Buddhist monks and Muslims.

Two Muslim groups in Sri Lanka condemned the church attacks, as did countries around the world, and Pope Francis expressed condolences at the end of his traditional Easter Sunday blessing in Rome.

"I want to express my loving closeness to the Christian community, targeted while they were gathered in prayer, and all the victims of such cruel violence," Francis said.

Six nearly simultaneous blasts took place in the morning at the shrine and the Cinnamon Grand, Shangri-La and Kingsbury hotels in Colombo, as well as at two churches outside Colombo, according to a Sri Lankan military spokesman, Brig. Sumith Atapattu.

A few hours later, two more blasts occurred just outside Colombo, one of them at a guesthouse, where two people were killed, the other near an overpass, Atapattu said.

Also, three police officers were killed during a search at a suspected safe house on the outskirts of Colombo when its occupants apparently detonated explosives to prevent arrest, authorities said.

A look at sites hit by Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The Easter Sunday bombings were Sri Lanka's deadliest violence since the country's civil war ended a decade ago. The nine blasts hit mainly churches and luxury hotels in Colombo, the capital. A look at the sites targeted:

CHURCHES

St. Anthony's Shrine is a Roman Catholic church in the Kochchikade suburb of Colombo and is one of the country's best-known churches. Its roots reach to the 18th century Dutch colonial period, when Catholicism was forbidden and priests held services in secret. Local beliefs say the church's founder, disguised as a merchant, helped a seaside fishing community by praying to stop the sea from eroding their village. The church was later built near the site.

St. Sebastian's Church: This Catholic church is in Negombo, a largely Catholic town north of Colombo. Built in the Gothic style, it was patterned on the Reims Cathedral in France and was completed in the 1940s.

Zion Church: This church is in the eastern coastal city of Batticaloa. It was founded in the 1970s.

HOTELS

The Shangri-La Hotel: This towering, luxurious hotel is near Colombo's main business district and is just a few steps from the sea. It has 500 guest rooms and suites and 41 serviced apartments.

The Kingsbury Colombo Hotel: This luxury hotel is in Colombo's city center, a few minutes' walk from the Shangri-La. It has 229 rooms.

The Cinnamon Grand Colombo hotel: This hotel is about a mile (2 kilometers) from the Kingsbury and near the sea in a bustling business district. It has 483 rooms and 18 suites.

OTHERS

A guesthouse outside Colombo, where a military spokesman said two people were killed.

An overpass outside Colombo.

A suspected safehouse, where authorities said three police officers were killed when the house's occupants detonated explosives to avoid arrest.

A look at Sri Lanka's troubled recent history marked by war

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—A series of blasts in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, blamed on religious extremists, recalled the worst days of the country's 26-year civil war.

A look at a long and troubled history marked by ethnic and religious divides:

YEARS OF WAR

Sri Lanka, an island nation of some 23 million people, was dominated for decades by the sharp divide between the majority Sinhalese, who are overwhelmingly Buddhist, and the minority Tamil, who are Hindu, Muslim and Christian. The mistreatment of Tamils helped nurture the growth of armed separatists and led to nearly 30 years of civil war, with Tamil Tiger fighters eventually creating a de facto independent homeland in the country's north. The Tigers were crushed in a 2009 government offensive, with some observers believing that tens of thousands of Tamils died in the last few months of fighting alone.

A RELIGIOUS DIVIDE

There is no history of violent Muslim militants in Sri Lanka. However, after the civil war ended, a religious divide quickly took hold, with hard-line Buddhist monks rallying Sri Lankans against what they argue is a pernicious threat: Muslims, who make up roughly 10 percent of the country's population. Buddhist nationalist leaders and false social media reports accuse Muslims of recruiting children, trying to grow their ranks by marrying Buddhist women and attacking Buddhist shrines. Small-town economics also plays a significant role, since Muslims own many of the country's small shops. As for the country's small Christian minority: While there have been scattered incidents of anti-Christian harassment in recent years, there has been nothing on the scale of what happened Sunday.

SOCIAL MEDIA WAR

In 2018, anti-Muslim violence flared across the hills of central Sri Lanka, fed by rumors spread over social media about attacks on Buddhists. Mobs of Buddhists swept through small towns, attacking mosques and Muslim-owned shops. The government briefly declared a state of emergency and ordered popular social media networks, including Facebook, Viber and WhatsApp, blocked for a time to stop the violence from spreading.

World

Comedian headed for landslide victory in Ukraine

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—A comedian whose only political experience consists of playing a president on TV cruised toward a landslide victory in Ukraine's presidential election Sunday in what was seen as a reaction against the country's entrenched corruption and low standard of living.

Results from 52% of polling stations' tallies showed sitcom star Volodymyr Zelenskiy receiving 73% of the vote and President Petro Poroshenko about 25%—a crushing rebuke to Poroshenko's five years in office.

Even before results started trickling in, Poroshenko accepted defeat based on exit polls, saying: "I am leaving office, but I want to firmly underline that I am not leaving politics."

Zelenskiy, for his part, promised wide changes at the top echelons of government and said his No. 1 task would be securing the release of about 170 Ukrainian military members taken prisoner in the east or in Russia.

AP

Ukrainian comedian and presidential candidate Volodymyr Zelenski speaks to his supporters at his headquarters after the second round of presidential elections in Kiev, Ukraine, Sunday, April 21, 2019.

Ukraine has been plagued by rampant graft, a sickly economy and a grinding, five-year war with Russian-backed separatists in the eastern part of the country that has killed over 13,000 people.

After his apparent election, Zelenskiy said he would engage Russia to try to end the conflict. He also said, without giving details, that "we will make a very powerful information war" in order to stop the fighting.

He also suggested, in a remark that could grate on Russia, that his victory could be a model for other former Soviet states that want to move forward from ossified politics: "To all the countries of the former Soviet Union—look at us, everything is possible."

Although the early results were a small fraction of the vote, the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine congratulated Zelenskiy, as did NATO secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg.

Zelenskiy, 41, became famous nationwide for his comic portrayal in a Ukrainian TV series of a high school teacher who becomes president after a video rant against corruption goes viral. In a case of life imitating television, Zelenskiy denounced graft as a real candidate.

Although Zelenskiy was criticized for a vague campaign platform and never holding public office, voters appeared to cast aside those concerns in favor of a thorough sweep of Ukraine's political leadership.

"I have grown up under the old politicians and only have seen empty promises, lies and corruption," said Lyudmila Potrebko, a 22-year-old computer programmer who voted for Zelenskiy. "It's time to change that."

Poroshenko was a billionaire candy magnate and former foreign minister before he took office in 2014 after huge street protests drove his Russia-friendly predecessor to flee the country. Although he instituted some reforms, critics said he had not done nearly enough to curb corruption.

Poroshenko positioned himself as a president who could stand up to Russia and said Zelenskiy would be easy prey for Moscow.

Although the Kremlin despises Poroshenko, Zelenskiy's apparent victory was greeted noncommittally in Russia.

"We do not yet associate hopes with the winner," Konstantin Kosachev, head of the foreign affairs committee in the upper house of the Russian Parliament, was quoted as saying by state news agency Tass.

Millions of people living in the rebel-controlled east and in Russia-annexed Crimea were unable to vote. Russia seized Crimea in 2014, and fighting in the east erupted that same year.

Poroshenko campaigned on the same promise he made when he was elected in 2014: to lead the nation of 42 million into the European Union and NATO. Zelenskiy pledged likewise to keep Ukraine on a Westward course but said the country should only join NATO if voters give their approval in a referendum.

Israeli election may have dimmed hopes for 2-state solution

JERUSALEM (AP)—Is the two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict dead?

After Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu coasted to another victory in this month's Israeli election, it sure seems that way.

On the campaign trail, Netanyahu ruled out Palestinian statehood and for the first time, pledged to begin annexing Jewish settlements in the West Bank. His expected coalition partners, a collection of religious and nationalist parties, also reject Palestinian independence.

Even his chief rivals, led by a trio of respected former military chiefs and a charismatic former TV anchorman, barely mentioned the Palestinian issue on the campaign trail and presented a vision of "separation" that falls far short of Palestinian territorial demands.

The two Jewish parties that dared to talk openly about peace with the Palestinians captured just 10 seats in the 120-seat parliament, and opinion polls indicate dwindling support for a two-state solution among Jewish Israelis.

"The majority of the people in the state of Israel no longer see a two-state solution as an option," said Oded Revivi, the chief foreign envoy for the Yesha settler council, himself an opponent of Palestinian independence. "If we are looking for peace in this region, we will have to look for a different plan from the two-state solution."

For the past 25 years, the international community has supported the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip—lands captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war—as the best way to ensure peace in the region.

The logic is clear. With the number of Arabs living on lands controlled by Israel roughly equal to Jews, and the Arab population growing faster, two-state proponents say a partition of the land is the only way to guarantee Israel's future as a democracy with a strong Jewish majority. The alternative, they say, is either a binational state in which a democratic Israel loses its Jewish character or an apartheid-like entity in which Jews have more rights than Arabs.

After decades of fruitless negotiations, each side blames the other for failure.

Israel says the Palestinians have rejected generous peace offers and promoted violence and incitement. The Palestinians say the Israeli offers have not been serious and point to Israel's ever-expanding settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, now home to nearly 700,000 Israelis.

The ground further shifted after the Hamas militant group took over the Gaza Strip in 2007 and left the Palestinians divided between two governments, with one side—Hamas—opposed to peace with Israel. This ongoing rift is a major obstacle to negotiations with Israel, and has also left many Palestinians disillusioned with their leaders.

Pope denounces 'cruel violence' of Sri Lanka Easter attack

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Francis denounced the "cruel violence" of the Easter Sunday slaughter of Christians and foreigners in Sri Lanka as he celebrated the most joyful moment on the Christian liturgical calendar by lamenting the bloodshed and political violence afflicting many parts of the world.

Francis skipped his homily during Easter Mass but delivered his traditional "Urbi et Orbi" (To the city and the world) speech highlighting conflicts in the Mideast, Africa and the Americas and demanding that political leaders put aside their differences and work for peace.

"May the one who gives us his peace end the roar of arms, both in areas of conflict and in our cities, and inspire the leaders of nations to work for an end to the arms race and the troubling spread of weaponry, especially in the economically more advanced countries," Francis said from the loggia of St. Peter's Basilica overlooking the flower-decked square below.

In a special appeal at the end, Francis lamented the "grave attacks" on Sri Lankan hotels and churches, which occurred just as the Christian faithful were celebrating Easter Mass that marks the resurrection of Christ following his crucifixion.

"I want to express my loving closeness to the Christian community, targeted while they were gathered in prayer, and all the victims of such cruel violence," Francis told a crowd of around 70,000 people in St. Peter's Square. "I entrust to the Lord all those who were tragically killed and pray for the injured and all those who are suffering as a result of this dramatic event."

More than 200 people were killed and hundreds wounded following near-simultaneous blasts at three Sri Lankan churches and three hotels frequented by foreigners.

In his Easter roundup of global conflicts, Francis warned that the world was increasingly becoming resigned to the ongoing battle in Syria. He called for a "renewed commitment for a political solution" that would respond to Syrians' need for freedom, peace and justice and allow for millions of refugees to return home.

He lamented how children in Yemen are "exhausted by hunger and war," while in North Africa, Libyans are enduring a fresh round of fighting between rival forces battling for control of Tripoli, the capital

"I urge the parties involved to choose dialogue over force and to avoid reopening wounds left by a decade of conflicts and political instability," he said of Libyan leaders.

Francis said he hoped the political and religious leaders of South Sudan would open a "new page in the history of the country" and work for reconciliation. Francis hosted South Sudan's president and opposition leader for a remarkable retreat at the Vatican earlier this month, during which the pope bowed down and kissed their feet, begging them to work for peace.

Focus

By KATHLEEN FOODY, ALLEN G. BREED and P. SOLOMON BANDA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP
In this Wednesday, March 27, 2019, frame from video, Kacey Ruegsegger Johnson kisses her daughter, Logan, as she drops her off at her school in Cary, N.C. Dropping her kids off at school used to be the hardest part of Ruegsegger Johnson's day. She would cry most mornings as they left the car, and relied on texted photos from their teachers to make it through the day.

Columbine survivors send kids to schools altered by attack

DENVER (AP)—Dropping her kids off at school used to be the hardest part of Kacey Ruegsegger Johnson's day. She would cry most mornings as they left the car and relied on texted photos from their teachers to make it through the day.

Now, the mother of four—and Columbine shooting survivor—sees mornings as an opportunity. She wakes early, makes breakfast and strives to send a clear message before her kids leave home: I adore you.

Twenty years after teenage gunmen attacked Columbine High School, Ruegsegger Johnson and other alumni of the Littleton, Colorado, school have become parents. The emotional toll of the shooting that killed 12 classmates and a teacher has been amplified by fears about their own kids' safety , spiking each time yet another shooter enters yet another school.

"I'm grateful I have the chance to be a mom. I know some of my classmates weren't given that opportunity," Ruegsegger Johnson said, tears springing to her eyes. "There are parts of the world I wish our kids never had to know about. I wish that there would never be a day I had to tell them the things I've been through."

As the survivors of Columbine entered adulthood, they watched the attacks at their school and so many others—Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Parkland—alter the American classroom.

Drills teaching students to "lock down" inside classrooms became routine. Schools formed teams to assess threats, particularly from students. Security firms forged a multibillion-dollar industry, introducing surveillance video, panic buttons and upgraded doors and locks. And police changed their strategies for responding to a gunman intent only on killing.

Security measures came into play just days before the 20th anniversary of the massacre, when a possible threat Tuesday locked down Columbine and other Denver-area high schools. All students were safe and left their classes, officials later said, adding that the lockdowns were tied to an FBI investigation but didn't provide details.

Some of the Columbine survivors find comfort in students being shielded by high fences or locked doors. Others find themselves frustrated by the ready acceptance of active-shooter drills in schools.

Now, many of these students-turned-parents grapple with crippling fear dwarfing pride as their children walk into their own schools.

Ruegsegger Johnson has developed her own ritual for the school drop-off. On a recent sunny spring morning, she helped her kids find their book bags and tie their shoes before ushering them to the car. She prayed aloud as they neared the school, giving thanks for a beautiful morning and asking for a day of learning and friendship.

As always, she made a silent addition: Keep them safe.

The prospect of Amy Over's 13-year-old daughter starting high school could have triggered a panic attack in the not-too-distant past. But now she's focused on helping the girl prepare for the unexpected.

She coaches her daughter when she ventures to places outside her mom's control: Where is the closest exit? What street are you on? Who is around you?

"I never want my kids to feel an ounce of pain, the way that I felt pain," Over said. "I know that that's something that I can't control. And I think that's hard on me."

Over was in the Columbine cafeteria when the gunmen approached the school, targeting students eating lunch outside. She escaped with no physical injuries, but has struggled emotionally for years.

Therapy and family support helped. But waving goodbye to her daughter on the first day of preschool triggered a panic attack—the first of many. She was diagnosed with chronic panic disorder, resumed therapy and found new strategies for her life as a mother of two.

Over's daughter, Brie, was 11 when her mother first told her about Columbine, a few days before the anniversary. That April 20, they visited the school for a memorial ceremony that included a reading of the names of the 13 people killed. Afterward, the Overs walked together through the quiet school.

Here is where she hid in the cafeteria, Amy Over showed her daughter. And that is the staircase where she last saw her basketball coach, Dave Sanders, who died in a classroom awaiting rescue after valiantly trying to help evacuate the school.

For Over, opening up to her daughter was cathartic and so they have continued to attend annual memorial events, now imbued with a gentler tone with the girl by her side.

"It's a day of reflection," Over said. "It's a day of love and hope. And I get to share that with my daughter."

Though it sometimes seems mass shootings inside schools are a commonplace occurrence, they are relatively rare, and statistics show the number has not substantially increased since 2000.

But that is of little consolation to a swath of American parents. About 2 in 10 parents said they are not at all or not very confident in their children's safety while at school, while a third of parents are very or extremely confident, according to a March survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Austin Eubanks, who survived being shot in the Columbine library, is among those who doesn't fear the schools his sons, ages 13 and 9, attend.

Instead, he laments that active-shooter drills, video surveillance and armed guards are all too routine for them—as natural as a tornado drill was for him growing up in Oklahoma.

"We are so unwilling to actually make meaningful progress on eradicating the issue," said Eubanks, who remains scarred by watching his best friend, Corey DePooter, die. "So we're just going to focus on teaching kids to hide better, regardless of the emotional impact that that bears on their life. To me, that's pretty sad."

Isolation, depression, addiction and suicide are among the larger dangers he sees facing his kids' generation, and he knows firsthand the damage those can cause.

For more than a decade after the attack, Eubanks was addicted to prescription pain medication. He got sober in 2011 and began repairing his family, including his relationship with his sons and their mother. He works at an addiction treatment facility and travels the country telling his story.

At home in Colorado, he tries to help his sons become attuned to pain others may be feeling. He encourages them to talk to an adult when peers seem so angry or afraid that they may need help. He tries to remember that—for them—all of the changes in schools are just normal.

He was horrified by videos that Marjory Stoneman Douglas students shot in Parkland, Florida, as they hid inside a classroom while a gunman moved through the halls of the high school. He has urged his own boys to always try to escape first—whatever it takes—even if the drills advise staying put.

"These are my children, and what I care about most is their safety," he said. "And I know that for them, in a situation like that, getting away from it as quickly as possible is the best likelihood of success."

When Kacey Ruegsegger Johnson's daughter Mallory was 8, a classmate saw her mom on a Denver news station. Mallory had a question: Was her mother famous?

Ruegsegger Johnson knew it was time for the conversation she and her husband had anticipated for years. During a family vacation, she pulled her oldest daughter aside for a private talk—the one that finally explained the scars marking Ruegsegger Johnson's right shoulder and why she was unable to reach up toward high shelves or use her right arm to lift the kids.

In 1999, Kacey Ruegsegger was reading a magazine in the school library when a teacher entered, shouting that someone had a gun. The junior crouched under a computer desk, pulling a chair in front of her body. She felt well-hidden, but the shooters' taunting voices and the sound of gunshots grew louder and got closer. Then one of the gunmen leaned down and fired a shotgun at her.

The blast shredded her right shoulder. She tried not to move or cry out, praying the shooter would believe she was dead and walk away. When the pair left the library, other students helped her flee.

For the last 20 years, she has lived with post-traumatic stress disorder, along with physical pain. She worked as a nurse until the injuries to her arm forced her to stop.

Ruegsegger Johnson was thrilled to become a mother, but struggled to leave her infant daughter at daycare during church services. She considered home schooling, terrified that sending her children into a school was akin to exposing them to danger.

Leaning on her religious faith and family support, she worked hard to push the terror down as her children got older. She avoided media coverage of school violence and became a resource for other survivors of shootings. She grew tired of living in fear and unwilling to let her past affect her kids' experience.

Though she still struggles occasionally, she resolved to make mornings before school a positive time, focused on building her children up. And she finds at least some comfort in their school's evacuation plans and security measures. She told her children that lockdown drills were like fire drills—practice to keep them safe from an unlikely danger.

But when Mallory confessed to feeling afraid that "a bad person" could still find her in the evacuation location used during one drill, Ruegsegger Johnson flashed back to herself crouched under that computer desk in the Columbine library.

"The bad guys found me, and I thought I had a really great hiding spot," she said. "So what am I going to say to a little girl who has that same fear that the bad guy might find her? It was a really hard moment for me."

Overdrive

2020 Ford Mustang: Built to race, drive daily with new horsepower

TNS
The 2020 Ford Mustang.

By PHOEBE WALL HOWARD
DETROIT FREE PRESS

For the record, the 2020 Ford Mustang designed to go 0 to 60 mph in 4.5 seconds with a top speed of 155 mph is meant for the regular guy. Or girl.

An outraged caller to the Free Press demanded to know how the carmaker could possibly explain delivering so much power with so few cylinders—330 horsepower with a four-cylinder engine.

Gearheads apparently scoff at the idea of just four cylinders for a high-performance car.

"This is indicative of where the industry is going, the idea of increasing power with smaller engines," said Karl Brauer, executive publisher at Kelley Blue Book. "It allows you to have more fuel efficiency and power at the same time. It's giving you the best of both worlds. And it's further proof that while you can't break the rules of physics, technology allows you to bend 'em."

Who would choose a lighter Mustang over the heavier, more powerful V8 Mustang GT?

Car expert Jonathan Klinger, spokesman for the Traverse City-based Hagerty Classic Insurance, called the latest Mustang news nothing less than "just astounding."

"If you back up a little bit, traditionally a muscle car meant shoving the most powerful engine — which used to mean also getting the biggest engine — into the smallest car you can. That's an American muscle car for you. A large engine in a small car," he said. "It speaks to just how far the traditional internal combustion engine has come."

He added, "We have to remember the Mustang started in the 'pony car' class, so some people will debate what's muscle car and what's a pony car. Different Mustangs over the years would have tilted one way or the other. Is it a muscle car, a pony car or a sports car? Regardless, Mustang has always stood for affordable performance."

A pony car is generally smaller than a midsize or full-size muscle car.

Ford at the New York Auto Show unveiled its new high performance package for the entry-level 2020 Mustang EcoBoost with a 2.3-liter turbo engine and a top speed of 155 mph, 10 mph faster than the standard Mustang EcoBoost model.

The car takes body parts perfected for the Mustang GT: brakes, aerodynamics and suspension components. This unveiling, just in time for Mustang's 55th anniversary, actually began with swapping a Ford Focus RS engine. And then a little magic.

Things have come a long way.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, it wasn't a great time for the American performance car, analysts agreed. From 1973 forward, the gas-guzzling cars took a big hit from the oil embargo, the fuel shortage, high gas prices and emissions standards.

At that time, Ford emerged with a Mustang II, a four-cylinder Mustang that had significantly less power, Klinger said. "It was anemic compared to what it replaced."

Still, it was the right car for the time, he said. "That car allowed Mustang to continue to exist and survive. It's the reason we're celebrating 55 years of Mustang now."

Ford has unleashed a vast array of products and power in recent months:

- 2019 Mustang EcoBoost, 310 hp
- 2020 Mustang EcoBoost, 330 hp
- 2019 Mustang GT, 460 hp
- 2019 Mustang Bullitt, 480 hp
- 2019 Mustang Shelby GT350, 526 hp

Soon Ford promises to emerge with a 2020 Mustang Shelby GT500 designed to exceed 700 hp. That's in the league with the insane 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye, which has a 6.2 liter V8 engine that delivers up to 797 hp.

The Ford Mustang dominated the sports car category with 28 percent of the market segment or 75,842 vehicles in 2018, and the company's leadership grew during the first quarter of 2019 with 29 percent of the segment. Dodge and Chevrolet rounded out the top 3, according to Kelley Blue Book.

Ford is focused on selling fast cars to regular people, Klinger said.

It's an evolution of their entry-level offering," he said. "That's what this four-cylinder represents. Someone who wants a combination performance and respectable fuel economy for daily driving. This is a great vehicle for someone who likes to go to the track as an amateur, too."

From a collector standpoint, Klinger said the Mustangs of the late 1980s and early '90s are seeing their value increase. "The highest performance Mustangs of that era wouldn't come close to the four-cylinder entry level today. The Mustang GT of the early 1990s was 225 hp. Today's GT is 460 hp."

No question, a heavier engine up front is a different driving dynamic.

"But this is a Mustang for someone who can race it with a helmet on the weekend and drive it to work in a suit on Monday," Klinger said. "That's the beauty of today's muscle car. That includes Camaro, Hellcat. They're relatively affordable, comfortable and come with factory warranties. Nobody needs two SUVs, two vans or two trucks."

He confessed, "A modern Mustang is on my short list of what I would love to buy and drive every day, if I was to buy a new car. The problem is, they keep making them better. Every time I think about it, a new one comes out that's better."

Jiyan Cadiz, Mustang communications manager at Ford, said the vehicle is the bestselling sports coupe in the world for three straight years because the company offers options at every price level.

"This sixth-generation Mustang has so much performance and exhilarating driving capability, including 0-60 mph in the 4-second range from a turbocharged four-cylinder — all the way to our all-new Shelby GT500 with more than 700 horsepower to deliver mid 3-second 0 to 60 mph sprints and the best handling ever in a Mustang," he said.

The new Mustang package will be available on both the coupe and convertible this fall. Based on current pricing, the cost is expected to range between $35,000 and $40,000.

Steve Beahm, head of passenger car brands for Fiat Chrysler North America, which builds the Dodge SRT Hellcat Redeye, welcomed the competition from Mustang.

"There's no doubt the high-horsepower muscle car wars are alive and well today," he said.

"Our most powerful Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat lineup in 2019 offers unmatched performance including the most powerful, quickest and fastest production muscle car, the 797-horsepower Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye. In addition to the performance, our enthusiast customers tell us the distinctive sounds coming from our supercharged HEMI V-8 engines, along with the iconic designs, set Dodge … muscle cars apart on the road and the track."

Study: What Americans believe is biggest threat on the road

By MICAH WALKER
DETROIT FREE PRESS

A recent national study has found that more than half of adults surveyed think distracted driving is the biggest threat on the road.

The survey was conducted online for Volvo by The Harris Poll, which included responses from 2,035 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, 1,665 of them drivers.

Fifty-five percent of Americans believe the No. 1 threat motorists face is distracted driving, higher than other common road threats, such as driving under the influence (31 percent), driving aggressively (8 percent) or speeding (3 percent). Smartphones were cited as the top source of distraction, at 43 percent.

The study also revealed which generation is more likely to use their phone behind the wheel. Gen X and millennials are tied at 81 percent, while Young Baby Boomers are not far behind, at 72 percent. Gen Z drivers are at 71 percent.

At least nine Americans die and 100 are injured nationwide every day in distracted-driving crashes, according to the National Safety Council. In addition, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute say that most crashes and near-crashes are the result of inattentive driving.

While distracted driving is the result of many car accidents, more people die from drunken driving. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, almost 30 people died every day in drunken-driving crashes in 2017.

The majority of Americans (71 percent) admit they use their phones while driving, mostly to talk (93 percent) and dial (74 percent). But over half of Americans say they engage in activities that take their eyes off the road for even longer, including sending texts (60 percent) and checking notifications (56 percent).

Parents with children under 18 in the household are among the most likely to use their phones while driving, whether they are at a stoplight (95 percent compared with 90 percent overall), driving alone (87 percent, compared to 80 percent) or driving with a passenger (75 percent compared to 66 percent).

Staying focused

To mark Distracted Driving Awareness Month in April, follow these tips from the Office of Highway Safety Planning:

- Get familiar with vehicle features and equipment before pulling out into traffic.
- Preset radio stations, MP3 devices, and climate control.
- Secure items that may move around when the car is in motion. Do not reach down or behind the seat to pick up items.
- Do not text, access the internet, watch videos, play video games, search MP3 devices, or use any other distracting technology while driving.
- Avoid smoking, eating, drinking, and reading while driving.
- Pull safely off the road and out of traffic to deal with children.
- Do personal grooming at home.
- Review maps and driving directions before hitting the road.
- Monitor traffic conditions before engaging in activities that could divert attention away from driving.
- Ask a passenger to help with activities that may be distracting.
- If driving long distances, schedule regular stops, every 100 miles or two hours.
- Travel at times when you are normally awake and stay overnight rather than driving straight through.
- Avoid alcohol and medications that may make you drowsy.

Life & Style

Before 'Endgame' arrives, a look at Marvel's box-office hits

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Marvel's Avengers are back to save the world, and the box office.

"Avengers: Endgame" arrives in theaters on April 26 with the conclusion of the fight between the galaxy's greatest heroes and Thanos, who wiped out half of all life at the end of last year's "Avengers: Infinity War." It's one of the year's biggest releases, and one that many theater owners are hoping will draw huge audiences after a sluggish start to the year at the box office.

This image released by Disney shows Robert Downey Jr. in a scene from "Avengers: Endgame." AP

It is the 22nd film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, a collection of movies that kicked off with 2008's "Iron Man." Since then, Marvel films have earned $18.6 billion at the box office, with the four "Avengers" films accounting for nearly $5 billion of that haul. Seven of the films, including this year's "Captain Marvel" and last year's sensation "Black Panther," have earned more than a billion dollars worldwide.

The following is a look at how Marvel has built its cinematic juggernaut, with the film's title, release date, domestic gross and total worldwide box office, as compiled by Comscore:

■ "Iron Man," May 2008, $318.6 million, $582 million

■ "The Incredible Hulk," June 2008, $134.8 million, $263.3 million

■ "Iron Man 2," May 2010, $312.4 million, $623.7 million

■ "Thor," May 2010, $181 million, $448.7 million

■ "Captain America: The First Avenger," July 2011, $176.7 million, $371 million

■ "Marvel's The Avengers," May 2012, $623.4 million, $1.52 billion

■ "Iron Man 3," May 2013, $409 million, $1.2 billion

■ "Thor: The Dark World," November 2013, $206.4 million, $645 million

■ "Captain America: The Winter Soldier," April 2014, $260 million, $714.3 million

■ "Guardians of the Galaxy," August 2014, $333.2 million, $773.3 million

■ "Avengers: Age of Ultron," May 2015, $459 million, $1.4 billion

■ "Ant-Man," July 2015, $180.2 million, $519.3 million

■ "Captain America: Civil War," May 2016, $408.1 million, $1.15 billion

■ "Doctor Strange," May 2016, $232.6 million, $677.6 million

■ "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2," May 2017, $390 million, $863.6 million

■ "Spider-Man: Homecoming," July 2017, $334.2 million, $880.2 million

■ "Thor: Ragnarok," November 2017, $315 million, $854.2 million

■ "Black Panther," February 2018, $700 million, $1.3 billion

■ "Avengers: Infinity War," April 2018, $679 million, $2 billion

■ "Ant-Man & The Wasp," July 2018, $217 million, $623 million

■ "Captain Marvel," March 2019, $387 million; $1.06 billion

IN LOVING MEMORY

MASANARI YASUDA

AUGUST 26, 1955 – APRIL 21, 2019

Viewing and last respects will be held on Wednesday, April 24, 2019
at Borja Funeral Homes from 8:00am to 10:00am.

Your thoughts, prayers, words of comfort and presence are sincerely appreciated.

THE FAMILY

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

†Dolores Masga Agulto

Remember Me

Fill not your heart with pain and sorrow,
but remember me in every tomorrow.
Remember the joy,
the laughter, the smiles,
I've only gone to rest a little while.

Although my leaving causes pain
and grief, my going has eased
my hurt and given me relief.

So dry your eyes and remember me
not as I am now, but as I use to be.
Because I will remember you all
and look on with a smile.
Understand, in your hearts,
I've only gone to rest a little while.
As long as I have the love of each of
you, I can live my life in the hearts
of all of you.

Please join us in prayers as we remember our beloved on the First Anniversary of her life in Heaven. Holy Mass of Intention will be celebrated nightly at 6pm at the Santa Soledad Church beginning Wednesday, April 24 through Thursday, May 2, 2019. On Sunday, April 28, 2019, mass will be at 6am/8:30am.

On the final day, May 2, 2019, appreciation dinner will be served after mass at the Social Hall of Santa Soledad Church.

With humble and sincere appreciation for your presence, thoughts and prayers.

The Children and Family

Ai Weiwei remembers disappearance of 43 Mexican students

By BERENICE BAUTISTA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's interest in studying human rights around the world led to his meeting with relatives of the 43 college students who disappeared in southern Mexico in 2014. That encounter led, in turn, to his new exhibit in Mexico's capital.

Ai has lived under house arrest in China and faced censorship because of his activism, even as his fame led to major exhibits in leading international museums, including the Tate Gallery in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

In Mexico, Ai chose a university museum to mount his exhibit dedicated to the case of the students from the teachers' college at Ayotzinapa in Guerrero state. He used students to assemble Legos into big, colorful portraits of the 43 missing young people.

"He wanted it to be a university structure," said Cuauhtémoc Medina, one of the curators of "Ai Weiwei: Reestablish memories," the show at the contemporary art museum of the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

People stand under the portraits of 43 college students who went missing in 2014 in an apparent massacre, by Chinese concept artist and government critic Ai Weiwei at the Contemporary Art University Museum (MUAC) in Mexico City, Mexico, Saturday, April 13, 2019. Each portrait in the work of art titled "Reestablish Memories" is made out of Lego blocks. AP

The idea began in 2016 when Medina took Ai to the Miguel Agustin Pro Human Rights Center, where the artist talked with some of the students' relatives.

"At some point he told them that he had also been a political prisoner, that when one is disappeared in a completely isolated situation, the only thing that keeps you alive is being totally convinced that your loved ones must be fighting by any means possible to get you back," Medina said.

Ai was confined to his home in China as a result of his outspoken criticisms following the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan province that killed some 90,000 people, including thousands of children in poorly constructed schools.

The 43 Mexican students disappeared Sept. 14, 2014, in the Guerrero city of Iguala after local police allegedly turned them over to a local drug gang. The federal government maintained the gang killed the students and burned their bodies at a garbage dump. But international experts raised doubts about that scenario and Mexico's new administration has created a commission to re-investigate.

"This is an example of the very interesting conversation that exists today between the aesthetic and the political," Medina said. "The human rights crisis in Mexico has become a global topic in a radical way, so that we can't pretend anymore that the disappearance of dozens or thousands of people or the deaths of more than 200,000 in recent years are secondary."

Ai, who also makes documentaries, received permission from the Ayotzinapa families to do a film on the case. Some of the interviews that are part of the film are being shown at the exhibit, which will be on display until Oct. 6.

But the students' portraits are the most powerful element.

"It was really interesting, because it's re-signifying the material completely," said Iván Leyva, a history student at the university who helped assemble the portraits. "Who hasn't played with Legos as a child?"

Judge scales back Weinstein suit, allows sex-traffic claim

NEW YORK (AP)—A lawsuit seeking to represent any woman with a claim against Harvey Weinstein can proceed on sex-trafficking grounds, a judge ruled Thursday, as he dramatically shrank the scope of an action trying to treat the disgraced movie producer and various companies like a mob organization.

Weinstein

U.S. District Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein eliminated 17 claims against the once powerful movie mogul who has been accused by women in several lawsuits of seeking to trade his influence in Hollywood for sexual favors. Weinstein also faces trial in state court on criminal sexual assault charges.

The judge also reduced the number of named plaintiffs from 10 to four and dismissed all other defendants. The women had alleged they were attacked from 1993 to 2011. Weinstein has denied engaging in any nonconsensual sex.

Elior Shiloh, an attorney for Weinstein, said in a statement that his lawyers agree with Hellerstein's dismissal of most of the claims and will "explore all options" to get the final claim thrown out too.

Attorney Elizabeth Fegan, representing the women, said the judge ruled correctly that Weinstein should face the sex-trafficking allegation "that he used his power to deceive and manipulate women, knowing he intended to sexually abuse them."

"We are disappointed that certain claims were dismissed and plan to file an appeal," she said.

The lawsuit first filed in late 2017 had sought to represent "dozens, if not hundreds" of women who say they were isolated and attacked by Weinstein. Unspecified damages were sought.

The lawsuit had also named companies and employees as defendants, saying they functioned together like an organized crime group to facilitate Weinstein's meetings with young women.

Hellerstein said he was dismissing all defendants except Weinstein because the lawsuit had insufficiently shown that they assisted, supported or facilitated sex trafficking.

Other claims were dismissed because the alleged assaults occurred too long ago and lawyers had not adequately explained why they were not brought within a time period set by law.

'The Curse of La Llorona' reigns over weekend box office

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Curse of La Llorona" brought good fortune at the box office.

The Warner Bros. horror film based on a Mexican legend about a woman who murdered her children and wanders the world looking for them brought in $26.5 million according to studio estimates Sunday, putting it in the top spot on its opening weekend—the last before "Avengers: Endgame" arrives to dominate.

"The Curse of La Llorona" ended the two-week reign of "Shazam!" in the top spot. The DC Comics superhero comedy was second with $17.3 million, continuing its strong run with a three-week domestic total of $121.3 million and giving Warner Bros. a 1-2 finish.

The inspirational "Breakthrough," the first release from 20th Century Fox since Disney acquired the studio, was third with $11.1 million, a respectable opening for the modestly budgeted faith-based film.

The reign of "La Llorona" will not last. Its top finish came on a quiet Easter weekend as studios cleared a path for the wildly anticipated "Avengers: Endgame," the Disney and Marvel juggernaut that should disintegrate all competition for several weeks to come.

Easter weekend saw very few new releases—and none with large budgets—giving smaller films like "La Llorona" a chance to sneak in a few dollars.

"Putting this movie in this sweet spot right before the opening of 'Endgame' really paid big dividends for Warner Bros." said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore. "It was a brilliant stroke of scheduling to place a horror movie right there."

The film overcame grim reviews (32% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) to win over audiences. Some scholars and critics also harshly criticized the film for a marketing campaign that involved using traditional Mexican healers for "spiritual cleansings" before screenings.

1. "**The Curse of La Llorona**," $26.5 million ($30 million international).
2. "**Shazam!**" $17.3 million. ($22 million international).
3. "**Breakthrough**," $11.1 million.
4. "**Captain Marvel**," $9.1 million ($6.5 million international).
5. "**Little**," $8.5 million.
6. "**Dumbo**," $6.8 million. ($13.7 million international).
7. "**Pet Sematary**," $4.9 million ($5.5 million international).
8. "**Missing Link**," $4.4 million
9. "**Us**," $4.3 million
10. "**Hellboy**," $3.9 million.

It was one of three horror films in the top 10 over the weekend—"Pet Sematary" and "Us" were the other two—at the end of a winter-spring stretch that along with Halloween has become a heyday for the genre.

Next week, even though it will still be April, summer essentially begins for Hollywood as Disney looks for "Endgame" to have possibly the biggest opening of all time.

"The summer season usually doesn't start until the first weekend of May, but Marvel can bend the calendar to their will," Dergarabedian said. "They can say, 'We're going the last Friday in April, here's your summer.'"

The receipts for "Captain Marvel" surged in its seventh week this weekend. It brought in $9.1 million to put it past $400 million in domestic box office, with audiences likely wanting to take in a small piece of the Marvel cinematic story before "Endgame."

The comedy "Little" was fifth in its second week for Universal. "Dumbo" finally crossed the $100 million threshold as it faded to sixth in its fourth week of a disappointing performance for a live-action Disney release.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included.

Michelle Branch, Black Keys' Patrick Carney tie the knot

NEW YORK (AP)—Michelle Branch and Patrick Carney of the Black Keys are married.

The Grammy-winning musicians tied the knot Saturday at the Marigny Opera House in New Orleans in front of close friends and family, a representative for Carney told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Among those attending the wedding were the couple's 7-month-old son, Rhys, and Branch's 13-year-old daughter from a previous relationship, Owen.

Branch, 35, wore a dress by Temperley London and walked down the aisle to Elvis Presley's "Can't Help Falling In Love" performed by Symphony Chorus of New Orleans.

Carney, 39, wore a Burberry suit.

The couple began dating in 2015. They collaborated together on Branch's 2017 album, "Hopeless Romantic."

Branch's hits include "All You Wanted," ''Everywhere," ''Are You Happy Now?" and "The Game of Love," with Santana.

The Black Keys, which includes singer-guitarist-producer Dan Auerbach, have a string of rock hits including "Lonely Boy," ''Tighten Up" and "Fever."

Madonna and Maluma to perform new song at Billboard Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—Madonna and Colombian singer Maluma will bring their new collaboration to life when they perform at next month's Billboard Music Awards.

NBC and dick clark productions announced Friday the duo will sing "Medellin" at the May 1 event in Las Vegas.

The song, released on Wednesday, is from Madonna's 14th album "Madame X," out June 14. She said the Latin-flavored album was inspired from living in Lisbon, Portugal, for the last few years.

Maluma has had major success on the Latin charts since releasing his sophomore album, 2015's "Pretty Boy, Dirty Boy." The 25-year-old singer won his first Latin Grammy last year for "F.A.M.E."—also nominated for top Latin album at the Billboard Awards.

Other performers will include BTS, Halsey, Kelly Clarkson, Jonas Brothers, Sam Smith, Normani and Mariah Carey

LA man wounded alongside Nipsey Hussle released from custody

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Authorities say a man arrested on a parole violation after being wounded in the Los Angeles shooting that killed Nipsey Hussle has been released from jail.

Kerry Lathan had been in custody since being shot March 31 along with the rapper. KABC-TV reports Lathan walked out of LA's Men's Central Jail on Saturday.

The state department of corrections arrested Lathan for associating with a known gang member—Hussle.

But supporters assert Hussle was a former gang member who'd transformed himself into a pillar of the community. Besides, Lathan's lawyer says, her client just happened to be in the area when Hussle was gunned down.

Corrections officials announced last week that they'd drop the new allegations.

Lathan served 25 years for a 1994 killing and was released seven months ago.

AP

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II waves to the public as she leaves after attending the Easter Mattins Service at St. George's Chapel, at Windsor Castle in England Sunday, April 21, 2019.

Happy birthday: Queen Elizabeth II turns 93

LONDON (AP)—Queen Elizabeth II is celebrating her 93rd birthday, which this year coincides with Easter Sunday.

The queen is marking Easter by attending a service with other senior royals at St. George's Chapel on the grounds of Windsor Castle, west of London.

She was joined by Prince William and his wife Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, and Prince Harry, whose wife Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex, is expecting their first child in the coming weeks and did not attend.

Harry and Meghan did post a birthday greeting for the queen on their Instagram page: "Happy Birthday Your Majesty, Ma'am, Granny. Wishing you the most wonderful day! Harry & Meghan."

The queen's birthday is marked this year by an unusual sunny spell that has sent flowers blooming on the extensive castle grounds.

Sunday is the first of two birthday celebrations each year for the queen. She marks her official birthday in June with the Trooping the Color parade.

The two-birthday tradition dates back more than 250 years, when it was instituted by King George II.

Elizabeth is the longest-reigning monarch in British history. She still maintains an active schedule, although she does not travel as often as she used to.

Her 97-year-old husband, Prince Philip, has retired from public duties and did not attend the service.

AP

In this Jan. 21, 2017 file photo, Madonna performs on stage during the Women's March rally in Washington.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Medical examiner: Clark Gable's grandson died of overdose

DALLAS (AP)—A medical examiner says the grandson of actor Clark Gable died of an accidental drug overdose. The Dallas County Medical Examiner's office says an autopsy found Clark James Gable III was killed by a combination of the opioids fentanyl and oxycodone, and the sedative alprazolam. It ruled his death an accident. Gable died in February. The 30-year-old lived in Dallas and hosted the reality TV show "Cheaters," which featured confrontations with people suspected of infidelity. He is survived by his fiancée and their infant daughter. Gable's death was the latest in a national opioid crisis that the Centers for Disease Control says claimed 48,000 lives in 2017. The manufacturer of Oxycodone last month agreed to pay $270 million to settle one of thousands of lawsuits blaming it in the crisis.

Colbert donates $400K from book to NC hurricane relief

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — "The Late Show" host Stephen Colbert has donated proceeds from his Hurricane Florence-related book to disaster-relief efforts in North Carolina. The Raleigh News & Observer reported Thursday that the comedian sent a check for $412,412 to Gov. Roy Cooper. The governor posted a "thank-you" on Facebook. Colbert and his writing staff composed the book "Whose Boat Is This Boat? Comments That Don't Help in the Aftermath of a Hurricane." It uses quotes from President Donald Trump's visit to North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence last fall. The 24-page faux-children's book was inspired by Trump's question about a yacht that landed in the yard of someone living near the North Carolina coast. The book was released in November.

Woman enjoys dating, but is distracted by online romance

DEAR ABBY: I am a woman who has re-entered the dating pool after a few years of being single. I have gone on some amazing dates with fabulous men.

I met someone online last summer. "Miles" had a similar story—long, bad marriage and now living life to the fullest. I adore his personality (and looks), but I have never met him in person. We talk often, sharing dating stories and everything else, knowing it won't go anywhere as he lives 1,000 miles away. We have developed a strong emotional bond and have become great friends.

My emotions have now moved past friendship. I believe Miles can sense it because he has pulled back a little. I know realistically it won't work due to the distance. My kids are still in school, and I'd feel guilty asking him to move away from his business, kids (grown), parents, family, etc.

Should I quit talking to him altogether, because apparently I can't keep it where it has been for the last several months? We agree that we "met" for a reason, and only time will tell what that reason is or if it goes anywhere. I'm heartbroken and emotionally unavailable to the great men around me. My heart is with Miles. Advice?

SMITTEN IN SOUTH CAROLINA

DEAR SMITTEN: You and Miles may have met for a reason, but there's also a reason why the two of you haven't met in person in nearly a year. The fact that his reaction to the idea that you might be getting serious about him is to pull back makes me wonder whether you may have jumped the gun. Before allowing yourself to fall further in love, you have some work to do to get your emotions back under control so you can move forward and be more receptive to the "great men" in your own area who are available.

DEAR ABBY: My mom is 82 and suffering from dementia. I have called her every Sunday since I left home for college in 1990. We used to talk for an hour, sharing what had happened to us since we last spoke.

Abby, I loved those calls, which allowed me to stay close to my mom despite the distance. Now I can barely manage five or 10 minutes. It's basically just me telling her things about my week. She still remembers me, but she doesn't talk much.

I have started to skip our weekly calls because they are very painful to me. Dad says Mom misses my calls, but I know that's not true. I know I should call her—even if she doesn't remember I did—but it hurts so much. Do you have any advice on how to deal with this?

HER SON IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

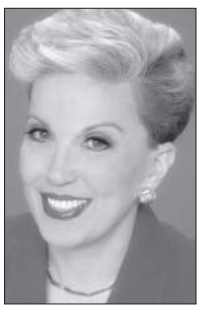
DEAR SON: You are a good son, and a fortunate one to have had such a close and loving relationship with your mom. Dementia is a terrible disease, one that steals not only memories but the ability to communicate. If you think you are feeling bad or guilty now, imagine how you will feel when she passes away and you are left knowing you didn't do the things you could to lift her spirits.

Please don't skip those calls. They may no longer last an hour, but your father has told you she is aware of their absence. Believe him. Tell her the good things that are happening in your life. Tell her jokes that will make her laugh. If her disease is as advanced as you say, you can tell them repeatedly and she won't know the difference. The sound of your voice is what counts, and the words, "I love you, Mom."

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

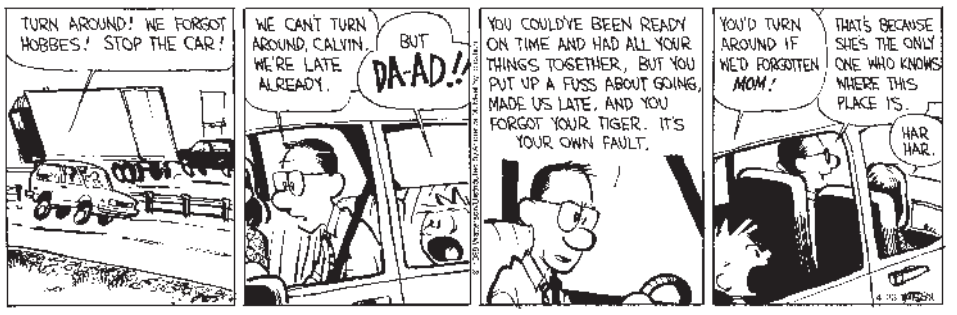


Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

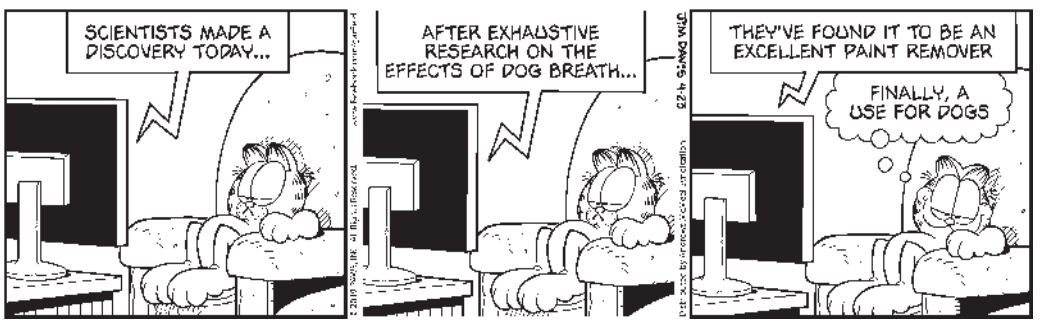
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


TURN AROUND! WE FORGOT HOBBES! STOP THE CAR!
WE CAN'T TURN AROUND, CALVIN. WE'RE LATE ALREADY.
BUT DA-AD!!
YOU COULD'VE BEEN READY ON TIME AND HAD ALL YOUR THINGS TOGETHER, BUT YOU PUT UP A FUSS ABOUT GOING, MADE US LATE, AND YOU FORGOT YOUR TIGER. IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT.
YOU'D TURN AROUND IF WE'D FORGOTTEN MOM!
THAT'S BECAUSE SHES THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHERE THIS PLACE IS.
HAR HAR.

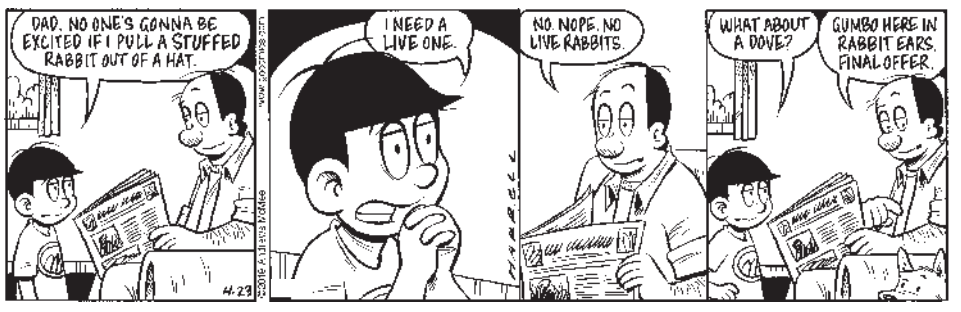
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


SCIENTISTS MADE A DISCOVERY TODAY...
AFTER EXHAUSTIVE RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF DOG BREATH...
THEY'VE FOUND IT TO BE AN EXCELLENT PAINT REMOVER
FINALLY, A USE FOR DOGS

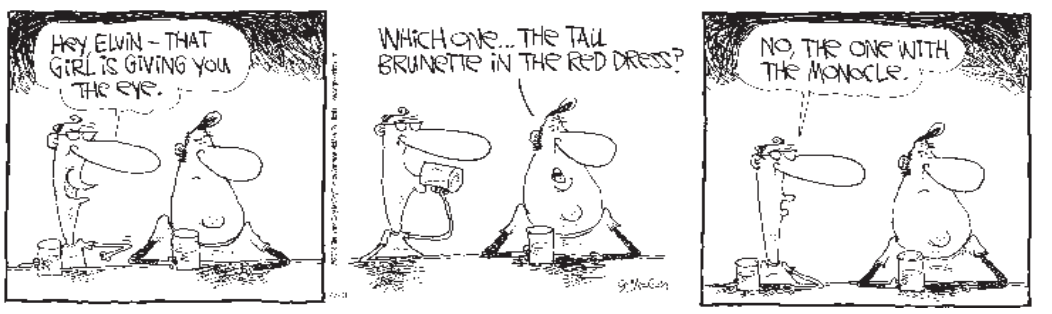
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, NO ONE'S GONNA BE EXCITED IF I PULL A STUFFED RABBIT OUT OF A HAT.
I NEED A LIVE ONE.
NO. NOPE. NO LIVE RABBITS.
WHAT ABOUT A DOVE?
GUMBO HERE IN RABBIT EARS. FINAL OFFER.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

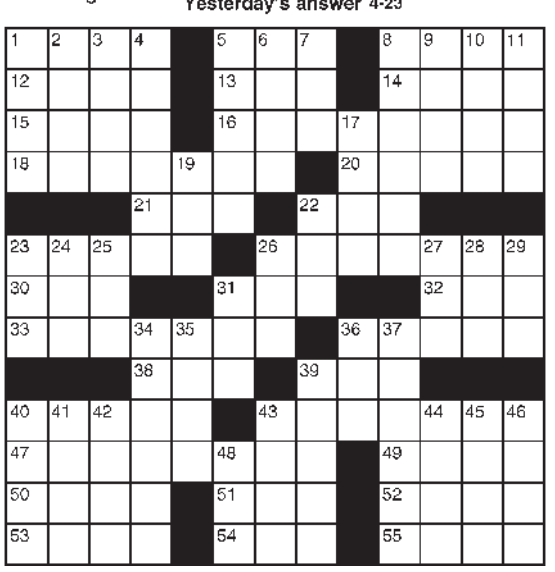
ACROSS
1 Whispered "Hey!"
5 Cacophony
8 Last write-up
12 Jazz singer James
13 Punk rock offshoot
14 Indy event
15 Meander
16 Has a portion (of)
18 Seeming contradiction
20 Small earrings
21 Allow
22 — Paulo
23 Social worker's load
26 Talkative birds
30 Half of bi-
31 Levy
32 French article
33 Layered dessert
36 Media barrage
38 Dog tags, e.g.
39 Sheep call
40 Acid in proteins
43 Lets off
47 Sunshades
49 "Phooey!"
50 Earth Day subj.
51 "A mouse!"
52 Outside (Pref.)
53 Painter Magritte
54 "— Kapital"
55 Grate

DOWN
1 Criminal, to cops
2 Old portico
3 Flag feature
4 Mexican entree
5 Station
6 Big-screen format
7 Neither mate
8 Speaker
9 Capital of Azerbaijan
10 On the rocks
11 Hardy heroine
17 Despot
19 — Moines
22 Swing band instrument
23 Drink holder
24 Santa — winds
25 Knight's address
26 Bit of butter
27 Gigi's "yes"
28 Stick with a kick
29 "— who?"
31 Poetic contraction
34 Closing number
35 Big fusses
36 Saloon
37 Firetruck necessity
39 Soaks up the sun
40 Unoriginal one
41 Spiked club
42 Pressing need
43 Entreaty
44 Killer whale
45 D.C. baseball team
46 Halt
48 British ref. work

Solution time: 22 mins.

M	A	G	I	■	B	A	A	■	S	P	O	T
I	C	A	N	■	H	O	B	■	W	A	C	O
S	L	I	U	■	A	L	B	R	■	G	H	I
I	U	L	I	P	S	■	A	C	H	O	S	S
■	■	■	H	A	S	E	■	A	L	P	■	■
A	L	B	A	N	■	■	A	N	■	A	P	S
L	E	A	■	S	C	R	O	D	■	G	A	I
T	O	D	D	■	A	L	B	A	C	O	R	E
■	■	■	H	E	H	■	S	E	T	H	■	■
A	B	A	C	U	S	■	L	E	A	D	O	N
A	L	B	E	R	T	■	I	I	■	M	A	K	O
R	E	I	N	■	A	C	S	■	P	R	A	M
P	U	T	T	■	G	U	T	■	S	T	A	E

Yesterday's answer 4-23



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dev Patel, 29; Jesse Lee Soffer, 35; Jaime King, 40; George Lopez, 58.

Happy Birthday: A practical approach to money, health and legal matters will help you clear up any mistake you have made. A steady pace forward and a pattern put in place will discourage others from taking advantage of you and encourage you to save more, eat less and avoid any situations that could negatively affect your goals this year. Your numbers are 3, 17, 24, 26, 33, 44, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Learn all you can. Ask questions, and take on tasks that will help you hone your skills and incorporate what you know into a challenge that you find exciting. Live in the moment, and focus on winning. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Don't feel you have to jump on someone else's bandwagon. Do your own thing, and invest in yourself. How you project, present and promote what you do will determine how far you'll get. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Check facts to avoid getting trapped in someone's evasiveness. Stick to the people you know are fair and will contribute as much as you. Partnerships will take an upward turn as soon as you make your position and your expectations clear. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take what others do and say seriously. If you are reluctant to speak up, you will enable others to take advantage of you. Form relationships that are solid and based on common interests, beliefs and goals. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Make improvements that will lead to better health, good relationships and interests that will stimulate you mentally, emotionally and physically. An active life will promote success, happiness and positive changes. Traveling, learning and making physical improvements are favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Simplicity will keep you out of trouble. Refuse to get involved in arguments or emotional disputes that are based on assumptions. Stay level-headed, and put your time and effort into establishing what you want and how to reach your goal. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Taking a trip or spending time with someone who can offer you insight into a different lifestyle will get you thinking about the possibility of making a change or move. Discuss your plans with someone you'd like to share your adventure with. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Someone older or with more experience will offer information that will change the way you see the past and encourage you to take a positive step into the future. Let go of what isn't working for you and embrace what is. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Take note of what others are doing. Don't be fooled into thinking someone is looking out for you. An emotional matter will be manufactured for someone else's benefit. Question anything that sounds suspicious. Offer love, not war. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* A change of plans will turn out to be a blessing in disguise. Observation and moderation will save you from making a decision prematurely. Not everything is as it appears, and someone is likely to offer false information. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Get involved in projects that make you feel good. What you accomplish and the people you connect with will lead to positive changes that will influence how you live and the way you handle your money. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Don't let confusion set in because someone is playing with your emotions. Consider who you are dealing with, and keep your distance from those pressuring you to take part in something that could affect your reputation or your personal finances. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are curious, persistent and opportunistic. You are ambitious and outspoken.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7		4			5		
			6			8		1
	6				8			7
5		1		2	9			
		9				4		
			7	3		1		5
8			1				6	
9		6			2			
	1				7		2	

Difficulty Level ★★ 4/23

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	3	9	2	7	4	5	8	6
2	4	6	9	5	8	1	3	7
7	5	8	1	6	3	4	2	9
8	1	7	5	3	2	6	9	4
3	2	5	4	9	6	8	7	1
9	6	4	7	8	1	3	5	2
6	7	3	8	4	9	2	1	5
5	8	2	6	1	7	9	4	3
4	9	1	3	2	5	7	6	8

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

WHEN SPRING HITS THE RUNWAY Solution: 7 letters

C	E	G	P	O	S	E	S	S	A	L	G	N	U	S
U	C	L	S	E	P	A	H	S	I	Z	E	S	E	C
T	I	A	Y	O	S	R	O	O	D	T	U	O	A	J
S	S	M	L	T	I	U	S	G	N	I	H	T	A	B
E	U	O	P	A	S	T	E	L	S	S	W	C	R	A
I	M	R	I	S	C	G	O	W	N	A	K	I	T	C
T	A	O	E	L	F	T	G	O	L	E	G	S	E	K
I	T	L	C	E	V	N	I	K	T	H	T	K	E	S
R	E	O	E	E	I	T	S	V	T	L	A	N	S	T
B	R	C	S	H	C	T	E	H	E	M	S	A	E	A
E	I	T	T	E	I	S	A	B	H	W	I	T	S	G
L	A	O	L	F	P	T	S	L	I	N	E	N	S	E
E	L	L	T	O	S	I	O	O	Y	T	U	A	E	B
C	O	U	T	U	R	E	N	Y	A	W	N	U	R	D
C	O	V	E	R	A	G	E	N	T	R	E	N	D	Y

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Yesterday's Answer: Ponytail

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COO	COO	COO

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Find today's solution in classified section

More bad news for Yanks: Judge out indefinitely

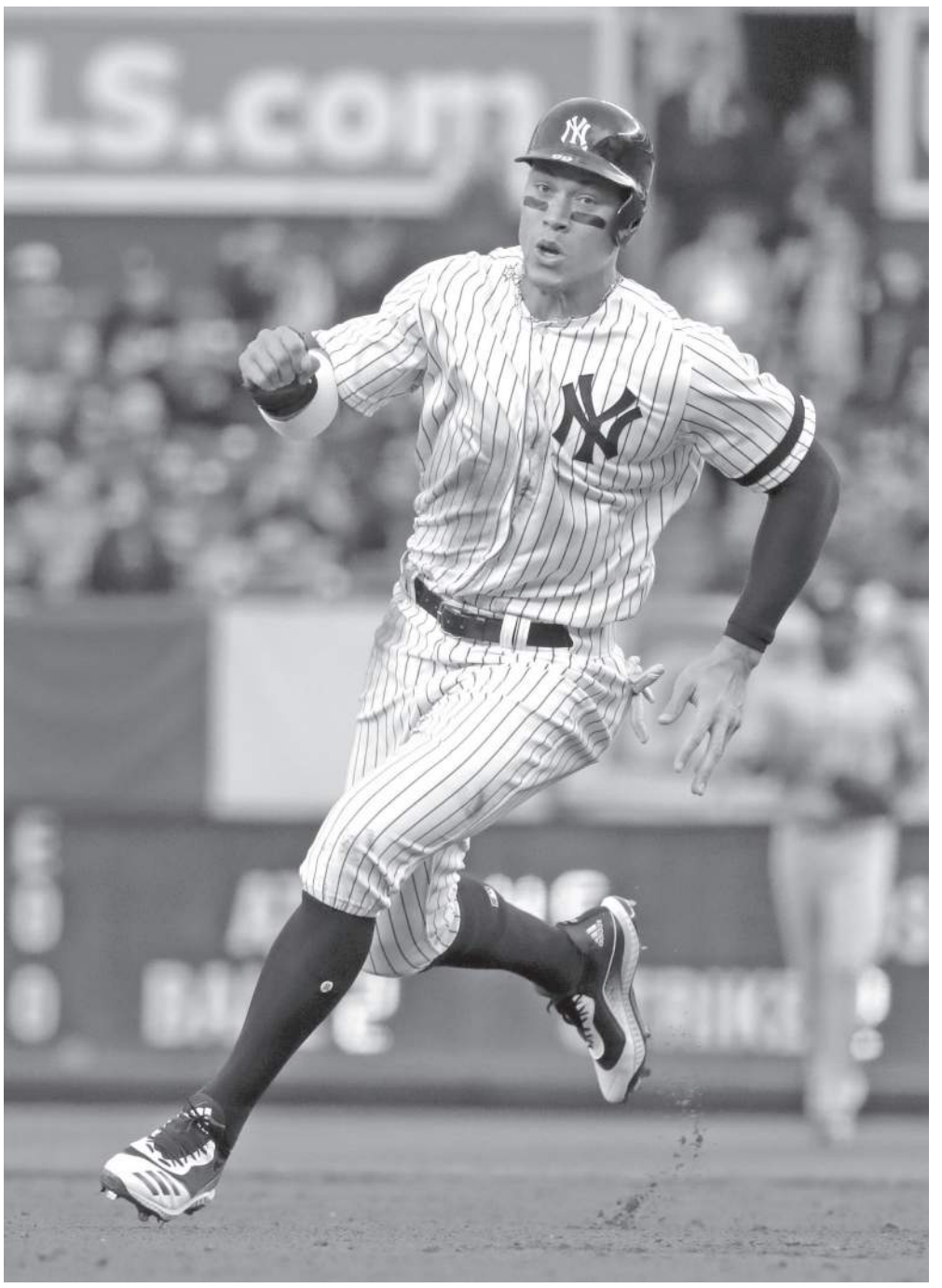
NEW YORK — Aaron Judge won't be back with the New York Yankees anytime soon, a further blow to an injury-decimated team with a mediocre record 3½ weeks into the season.

New York's biggest offensive threat and the heart of its clubhouse went on the injured list for the third time in four seasons Sunday, a day after straining the oblique muscle on the left side of his abdomen while hitting a sixth-inning single against Kansas City.

"Especially tough times like this, when a lot of guys are beat up, I wanted to be out there in the trenches with the guys every single day," Judge said after Sunday's 7-6, 10-inning win over Kansas City .

Manager Aaron Boone called it a "pretty significant strain in there" and would not estimate a return date. Judge broke his right wrist when hit by a pitch by the Royals' Jakob Junis last July 26, and while Boone originally projected a return in three weeks, Judge did not rejoin the Yankees until Sept. 14.

"There's no need to put a time, a clock on it, because what happened — just like what I did with the wrist last year," Judge said. "So no need to go down that road again."



AP

New York Yankees' Aaron Judge runs to third base on a single by Luke Voit as Kansas City Royals second baseman Whit Merrifield stands nearby during the first inning of a baseball game Thursday, April 18, 2019, in New York.

New York was 65-36 when Judge went on the DL, went 25-20 while he was out, then won 10 of its final 16 games en route to a second-place finish in the AL East. The Yankees are 11-10 this year.

Asked whether he felt anything before the sixth-inning single, Judge paused three seconds before answering: "just on the swing." Asked what his first thought was when he felt the pain, he responded to the surrounding media: "I can't say that on TV. It wasn't good."

Judge became the Yankees' major league-high 13th player on the injured list and the 14th overall this season, joining left fielder Giancarlo Stanton (strained left biceps), center fielder Aaron Hicks (strained left lower back), catcher Gary Sánchez (strained left calf), shortstop Didi Gregorius (Tommy John surgery), third baseman Miguel Andújar (torn labrum in right shoulder) and first baseman Greg Bird (torn plantar fascia in left foot).

Those six and Judge accounted for 175 of the team's record 267 homers last year, 515 of 851 runs and 515 of the 821 RBIs. In addition, new shortstop Troy Tulowitzki has a strained left calf.

New York's starting lineup for the series finale against the Royals would have pushed the spring training rule requiring four regulars to make the trip for road games, resembling a Broadway show stocked with understudies near the end of a lengthy run.

"You feel like this a great opportunity for us," Boone said. "I feel like it can make the end all that much more sweet."

DJ LeMahieu was at second, followed by designated hitter Luke Voit, center fielder Brett Gardner, right fielder Clint Frazier, left fielder Mike Tauchman, third baseman Gio Urshela, first baseman Mike Ford, catcher Austin Romine and shortstop Tyler Wade. New York gave second baseman Gleyber Torres a day off, leaving Gardner and Voit as the only starters left from opening day.

"They're going to be just fine," Judge said. "Other guys get a chance to get some playing time and get a chance to show what they've got and step up."

Judge suffered a season-ending right oblique strain while fouling off a pitch against the Los Angeles Dodgers on Sept. 13, 2016.

Bellinger robs Yelich, Dodgers top Brewers

MILWAUKEE (AP)— Cody Bellinger reached over the right field wall to rob Christian Yelich in the eighth inning of yet another home run, then hit a solo drive off Josh Hader with two outs in the ninth to lift Los Angeles over the Brewers on Sunday night, 6-5.

Bellinger connected for his 11th home run. On Friday night, the hard-throwing Hader (0-2) gave up a three-run homer to Enrique Hernandez in the eighth that led Los Angeles to a 5-3 win.

Joc Pederson hit two home runs, including a drive to begin the game, and tied a career high with four hits. He scored three times as the Dodgers won for the seventh time in eight games. They took three of four games at Miller Park.

Red Sox 4, Rays 3

In Florida, Christian Vazquez hit a sacrifice fly in the 11th inning, and the Boston Red Sox completed an uplifting three-game sweep of the AL East-leading Tampa Bay Rays.

Rafael Devers singled off Jose Alvarado (0-2) to start the 11th and went to second when Michael Chavis walked.

Yankees 7, Royals 6, 10 innings

In New York, Austin Romine drove in the winning run in the 10th inning with his third RBI single, and New York overcame a bullpen collapse that followed another scoreless start by James Paxton to beat Kansas City.

After adding All-Star slugger Aaron Judge to their ever-growing injury list, the Yankees escaped a couple late jams and got back over .500.

Braves 11, Indians 5

In Cleveland, Josh Donaldson had two homers and four RBIs, Freddie Freeman added three hits and Atlanta pounded Cleveland's pitching for the second straight night.

Atlanta outscored Cleveland 19-5 over the final 14 innings of the three-game series. The Indians won the first game and led 7-0 after two innings in Game Two, but the Braves rallied for an 8-7 win.

Rangers 11, Astros 10

In Arlington, Texas, Joey Gallo had the first sacrifice fly of his career in his 1,337th plate appearance and matched his best with five RBIs, helping Shelby Miller get his first major league victory in two years as Texas held on to beat Houston.

The Astros hit five solo home runs after falling behind 10-1, including a pair from Carlos Correa and Josh Reddick in the eighth inning to get within three.

Blue Jays 5, Athletics 4

In Oakland, California, Justin Smoak got thrown out on a wild sequence that began with another sensational play by Oakland center fielder Ramon Laureano, but wound up with four hits in Toronto's victory.

Smoak homered to help Toronto post its first road sweep of at least three games since 2015 and cap a 6-1 trip for manager Charlie Montoyo's club.

Cardinals 6, Mets 4

In St. Louis, Paul Goldschmidt drove in two runs and Noah Syndergaard had better luck at the plate than on the mound, hitting a homer with Dexter Fowler's help as St. Louis beat New York.

Syndergaard (1-2) allowed six runs, four earned, on eight hits in five innings, but his most memorable play came while batting in the fourth. He hit a deep flyball to center that Fowler leaped for on the warning track even though it was well below the fence. The ball deflected off Fowler's glove and over the fence for Syndergaard's fifth career homer and first since Aug. 16, 2016, at Arizona.

Padres 4, Reds 3

In San Diego, Austin Hedges homered and Wil Myers hit a go-ahead, two-run double in the four-run third inning for San Diego, which beat Cincinnati to snap a six-game losing streak.

Myers' double to left off Tyler Mahle gave the Padres their first lead in a week. They hadn't led since taking a 1-0 advantage in the first inning at Arizona on April 14 in a game they'd lose 8-4.

Cubs 2, Diamondbacks 1

In Chicago, David Bote hit a game-ending RBI single in the ninth inning, and Chicago used a terrific performance by Tyler Chatwood to beat Arizona.

Led by Chatwood's six sparkling innings, Chicago carried a 1-0 lead into the ninth. But Jarrod Dyson hit a drive to right off Pedro Strop (1-1) with one out, tying it at 1.

The Cubs then got right to work against Archie Bradley (1-2) in the bottom half. Javier Baez led off with a double up the first-base line and went to third when Adam Jones fumbled the ball in right.

After Willson Contreras was hit by a pitch, Bote hit a liner back up the middle for his fourth career game-ending RBI.

Angels 8, Mariners 6

In Anaheim, California, Tommy La Stella hit two home runs and Los Angeles held on against Seattle to end a six-game losing streak.

Kevan Smith and Brian Goodwin also homered and Mike Trout hit two doubles for the Angels, who avoided a four-game sweep in the series with the Mariners. Jaime Barria (2-1) gave up one run in five innings.

Twins 4, Orioles 3

In Baltimore, Kyle Gibson pitched six sharp innings, Willians Astudillo drove in two runs and Minnesota held off Baltimore for a three-game sweep.

After hitting 11 home runs in a doubleheader Saturday, the Twins used a different approach to secure their ninth straight victory over Baltimore.

Tigers 4, White Sox 3

In Detroit, Daniel Norris struck out six batters in five innings to earn his first win in two years and help Detroit beat Chicago.

Norris (1-0) allowed two hits and walked one, earning his first victory since Sept. 28, 2017, and Gordon Beckham homered against his former team as the Tigers won two of three in the series.

Nationals 5, Marlins 0

In Miami, Stephen Strasburg dominated his favorite foil, striking out 11 and allowing two hits in eight innings to help Washington avert a series sweep.

Ryan Zimmerman hit two solo home runs, and Brian Dozier also had a solo homer.

Celtics beat Pacers, complete rare series sweep

AP
Boston Celtics guard Kyrie Irving, right, draws the offensive foul from Indiana Pacers forward Bojan Bogdanovic, left, during the first half of Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Indianapolis, Sunday, April 21, 2019.

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Gordon Hayward and Marcus Morris took care of some housecleaning Sunday.

They dusted off their 3-point shooting touch in time to help the Boston Celtics complete a clean sweep.

Hayward scored 20 points, Morris added 18 and the duo combined for five 3s over the final 5½ minutes to give Boston a 110-106 victory and its first 4-0 series victory in eight years.

"I knew there was going to be a spark off the bench. (On Sunday) and that person was Gordon Hayward," All-Star guard Kyrie Irving said. "This is his city. I'm glad he had a chance to put on a performance like that in a closeout game."

Just how rare is a sweep for a franchise with a league-record 17 titles?

Since 1986-87, the Celtics had done it just once — in the first round against the New York Knicks. And between the Celtics' title-clinching sweep over the Minneapolis Lakers in 1958-59 and their perfect run through the 1985-86 Eastern Conference finals against Milwaukee, the Celtics achieved it just twice—in 1979 against Houston and in 1980 against Chicago.

So when coach Brad Stevens was asked Saturday about how he'd react if his players earned some time off, Stevens said he wasn't sure.

Now, last year's Eastern Conference runner-ups can start a new to-do list with a potential matchup looming against the top-seeded Bucks.

"It's going to take everything we have," Hayward said. "That's why it's good we finished this series. We can rest up, prepare, and have some extra time."

Clearly, the Celtics played better than a No. 4 seed in this series.

They won the first three games on the strength of a suffocating second-half defense that twice limited the Pacers 12-point quarters and once to eight. This time, they finished the job by grinding it out behind a group of polished veterans.

The game swung when Indiana guard Cory Joseph was called for a Flagrant 1 foul with 6:45 left. Jayson Tatum made both free throws to give Boston an 83-82 lead. After Al Horford made 1 of 2 free throws on Boston's next possession and then Morris knocked down a 3 and Hayward completed a three-point play to give the Celtics a 90-83 advantage with 4:15 to go.

Hayward and Morris were just getting started. Over the next three-plus minutes, they made three more 3s to give Boston a 102-90 lead with 1:04 to go.

Even a final flurry of 3s couldn't bail out Indiana. Bojan Bogdanovic scored 22 points and Tyreke Evans scored a playoff career-high 21 as the Pacers got swept for the second time in three years—the only two times it has happened in franchise history.

Trail Blazers 112, Thunder 98

In Oklahoma City, Damian Lillard scored 15 of his 24 points in the third quarter, and the Portland Trail Blazers held Russell Westbrook without a basket in the second half in beating the Oklahoma City Thunder to take a 3-1 lead in their series.

Lillard had another big third quarter after scoring 25 points in the period in a Game 3 loss Friday. In this game, the All-Star point guard was 5 of 7 in the third to help Portland take control for good.

Lillard made his first basket with 1:14 left in the first half after missing his first six shots, but he still had seven assists before the break.

"We've kind of come to expect it," Portland coach Terry Stotts said. "He manages the game. He senses the moment when we need him to do different things. He's an ultimate competitor. He is going to give it his all."

C.J. McCollum scored 27 points, Al-Farouq Aminu had 19 points and nine rebounds and Maurice Harkless added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Trail Blazers. Portland can close out the series Tuesday at home.

Paul George had 32 points and 10 rebounds for Oklahoma City. Dennis Schroder added 17 points.

Raptors 107, Magic 85

In Orlando, Kawhi Leonard missed the NBA playoffs last season, in multiple ways.

He wasn't playing the games.

He wasn't feeling the games, either.

That's not a problem this season for the 2014 NBA Finals MVP. Healthy and happy, Leonard has the Toronto Raptors one win away from the second round. He scored 34 points and the Raptors beat the Orlando Magic to take a 3-1 lead in their Eastern Conference first-round series.

"You just want to be out there on the floor, with your teammates and just feel that team spirit and chemistry, just trying to focus on one goal," said Leonard, who was out for almost all of last season, his last with San Antonio before an offseason trade to Toronto. "That's something I was missing, just being out, sitting out. That's why it's a blessing this year just to be able to play and be on the floor, regardless of what the outcome is."

Pascal Siakam and Norman Powell each scored 16 for the Raptors, who can advance with a home win in Game 5 on Tuesday. Toronto has now won three consecutive postseason games, only the third time that's happened in franchise history.

Aaron Gordon scored 25 for the Magic, making his first seven shots of the second half. Evan Fournier scored 19 and Nikola Vucevic added 11 for the Magic, who committed 17 turnovers that became 21 Toronto points.

Warriors 113, Clippers 105

In Los Angeles, A little scoreboard watching inspired Klay Thompson and Golden State. Seeing Houston up 3-0 on Utah combined with having dropped a game at home, the Warriors got back to business.

Kevin Durant scored 33 points and Thompson added 32 in a 113-105 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday that gave the Warriors a commanding 3-1 lead in their first-round playoff series.

"We came in with that mindset to put our foot on the throttle and not let go," Thompson said. "We let go in Game 2 and we won't do that the rest of the playoffs. I really believe that."

After a quiet 12 points in Game 3, Thompson broke out for 27 points by halftime, when Durant had 19.

"In the first quarter, we really didn't need to do anything special. Klay was just amazing. K.D. was consistent the whole game," Stephen Curry said. "For us, obviously with the threats we have out there, it is just a matter of trying to be as patient as possible."

Curry's patience was tried as he missed his first six shots and was in foul trouble for the second straight game before finishing with 12 points. Andrew Bogut fouled out with 5:50 remaining in the game with eight points and 10 rebounds.

Browns enter NFL draft as outsiders without 1st-round pick

CLEVELAND (AP) — John Dorsey's patience is about to be tested as if never before.

After having the No. 1 overall pick in each of the past two NFL drafts, the Browns—and their industrious general manager—will begin this year's as spectators.

They may not stay that way.

Dorsey, who has spent the past 16 months overhauling Cleveland's roster and reawakening "the sleeping giant" as he likes to call the Browns, doesn't currently have a first-round pick after trading it to the New York Giants in the stunning mega-deal for superstar wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr.

The No. 17 pick was part of the package in March required to land Beckham, whose arrival in Cleveland and pairing with quarterback Baker Mayfield has Browns fans convinced a Super Bowl trip is near.

Normally, it would be unnerving for a rebuilding team not to have a first-round pick. Dorsey, though, has lessened the urgency by transforming the Browns from a 0-16 team in 2017 into a 7-8-1 squad last season and potentially the AFC North's favorite this season.

That's not say this isn't an important draft as Dorsey, who previously helped rebuild Kansas City into the contender it is today, can plug holes and build depth. And if he feels there's a player he can't live without, Dorsey said he'd be willing to move back into the first round.

"If I deem it will help the Cleveland Browns, surely I will do that if it helps the organization moving forward, but the compensation on the back end cannot be outrageous," Dorsey said last week. "It has to work on both sides."

But would he be willing to give up a significant amount?

"If a certain player is there that I deem that the value fits the player, yes," he said.

Barring a trade, Cleveland's first pick won't be until No. 49 (midway through the second round) and Dorsey has seven others to continue a makeover few expected would yield such positive results this early.

Dorsey's choice of Mayfield last year took many experts by surprise, but it proved to be a savvy selection as the dynamic quarterback set an NFL rookie record with 27 touchdown passes.

The key now is adding more quality players to help Mayfield, get the Browns back in the playoffs for the first time since 2002 and maybe to their first Super Bowl.

In the meantime, patience will be required.

Ronaldo becomes first player to win Europe's Top 3 leagues

AP

Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates at the end of a Serie A soccer match between Juventus and AC Fiorentina, at the Allianz stadium in Turin, Italy, Saturday, April 20, 2019. Juventus clinched a record-extending eighth successive Serie A title, with five matches to spare, after it defeated Fiorentina, 2-1.

ROME (AP)—The breakthrough under Alex Ferguson at Manchester United. Then the coronation at Real Madrid. And now another title at Juventus.

If ever there was a need to emphasize Cristiano Ronaldo's impact as a footballer, the five-time Ballon d'Or winner did it again this weekend by helping Juventus to the Serie A title in his first season in Italy.

In doing so, the 34-year-old Ronaldo became the first player in history to win league titles in the English Premier League (with United), the Spanish league (Madrid) and Serie A (Juventus).

"I'm very happy to have won in England, Spain and now the league title in Italy as well," Ronaldo said. "It meant a lot to me and it means a lot to us as a team."

Other players have won titles in three of the five major European leagues (England, Spain, Italy, Germany and France) but nobody had previously put together the combination of England, Spain and Italy.

David Beckham played in four of the top leagues but only won titles at United (six), Madrid (one) and Paris Saint-Germain (one), having failed to lift the Serie A trophy during his two loan spells at AC Milan.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic won four Serie A titles (three with Inter Milan and one with AC Milan), the Spanish league with Barcelona and four French championships with PSG.

Brazil fullback Maxwell was on many of those same teams as Ibrahimovic and also won in Italy, Spain and France.

Then there was Arjen Robben, who won the Premier League twice with Chelsea before adding a Spanish title at Real Madrid and seven Bundesliga trophies at Bayern Munich.

Another Dutchman who achieved the feat was Mark van Bommel, with titles with Barcelona, Bayern Munich (two) and AC Milan.

While Juventus also won the league in the seven seasons before Ronaldo's arrival, there was no doubting his impact in Turin. With 19 goals and six assists in 27 Italian league matches this season, Ronaldo played a part in nearly 40 percent of Juventus' goals.

So it came as no surprise when his dangerous cross from a sharp angle was redirected in by a defender as an own-goal for the winner in Juve's 2-1 win over Fiorentina on Saturday—giving the Bianconeri more than the single point they needed to secure a record-extending eighth straight title with five rounds remaining.

It's the sixth league title of Ronaldo's career.

The first came as a 22-year-old at United, ending a four-year drought for Ferguson's squad as Ronaldo scored 17 goals—three fewer than Didier Drogba's league-best 20.

That was just a warmup for what came next.

In 2007-08, Ronaldo led the Premier League with 31 goals and helped United to the league title and the Champions League trophy.

KNIGHTS

From Page 28

SDA's silence.

With SDA reeling, coach Francis San Nicolas had the luxury of giving his starters a breather during the second period. Reserves Joey Hong and Michael Mercado came to play and scored the two baskets that kept MCS in the lead at the break, 15-6. Tommy Jin netted all 4 points for SDA.

When action resumed, both teams struggled with only Leland Deleon Guerrero scoring for the Knights and Jin doing the same for the Guardians.

Still ahead, 17-8, the Knights recalled their starters in the fourth period to seal the deal and they did not disappoint. Naraja drilled a 3-pointer then cruised past the SDA defense for an easy fastbreak layup, while Galang, Charles Cepeda, and Deleon Guerrero also scored in the final frame.

Galang and Naraja led the Knights' balanced attack after making 8 and 7 markers, respectively, while Deleon Guererro and Sasamoto chipped in with 4 apiece. Jin paced SDA with his 8 points.

Meanwhile, MCS had a sweep yesterday after prevailing, too in the girls division game, 30-19.

Casey Pathil led the Lady Knights' charge with her 13 points, while Brandie Matsumoto and Kaithlyn Chavez combined for 13 more points for the visiting team.

With the win, MCS evened its record to 2-2 while the Lady Guardians absorbed their fourth loss in five games.

Meanwhile, at the Saipan International School's court, the Geckos whipped Northern Marianas International School, 51-25.

The Phoenix kept the game close at the end of the first half, as SIS was only ahead by 4, 16-12. However, the Geckos pulled away in the second half to rout NMIS and improve their record to 4-2. The Phoenix dropped to a 1-6 slate.

Daniel Nam had 16 of his 20 points in the second half to tow SIS to victory. Danny Lee and Dylan Mister also finished in double digits, as the former registered 13 markers and the latter logged 10 points. Justin Mateo and Eddie Valdoz had 12 and 11 points, respectively, in a losing effort for NMIS.

Meanwhile, SIS will host Agape Christian School tomorrow, while NMIS will play against SDA at the Guardians' court, and Saipan Community School will battle Grace Christian Academy at the Tsunamis' court in Susupe.

MCS 30—Galang 8, Naraja 7, Deleon Guerrero 4, Sasamoto 4, Cepeda 3, Hong 2, Mercado 2.

SDA 13—Jin 8, K. Rechucher 3, H. Rechucher 2.

Scoring by quarters: 11-2, 15-6, 17-8, 30-13.

GREGOIRE

From Page 28

special," the Saipan International School student said.

Meanwhile, after his title win in the boys U14 singles, Gregoire returned to the AMP court in the afternoon to play in the U18 doubles finals. He teamed up with U12 player Juncheol Hwang and they arranged a finals match against U16's Sam Ryu and Sean Lee after stunning No. 2 seed Isaac Heo and Kwon, 6-4, 6-4.

Lee and Ryu went on to foil Gregoire and Hwang's bid for another upset after registering a 6-4, 6-1 triumph in the finale. The eventual champions made it to the title game after eliminating Hyumin Cho and Alex Park, 6-1, 6-2. Park and Cho, before losing in the semis, downed Gang Min Kim and Jun Wang, 6-3, 7-5.

Kim and Wang ended up in last place in the division, while Kwon and Heo were ranked third after a free victory (walkover) against Park and Cho in the consolation match last weekend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, runners-up Anthony Gregoire and Juncheol Hwang and champions Sam Ryu and Sean Lee pose for a photo after receiving their medals during the awards ceremony for the boys U18 singles event of the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

M-LEAGUE

From Page 28

was ranked No. 6, avoiding the cellar after defeating Matansa last April 14 and ending up with a 1-1-4 mark.

The winner of the Old B Bank-KFAS playoff match will challenge No. 1 CNMI Boys U18 National Team for the finals slot in the May 5 match. The NMI U18 drew a bye at the start of the playoffs and automatically marched into the semifinals after registering the division best and perfect 6-0-0 record.

Other first round playoff pairings are TanHoldings Football Club vs Kanoa FC and Paire against Matansa. Both games will be played this Sunday with TanHoldings and Kanoa colliding at 3pm and Paire and Matansa meeting at 5pm. Paire placed second in the team standings with its 5-0-1 mark to set up a make-or-break game against the last-ranked Matansa, which has yet to win this season. TanHoldings matched Old B Bank's record, but lost the tiebreak (goal difference) and fell to No. 4, while Kanoa finished fifth with its 2-1-3 card.

Victors in Sunday's pair of matches in Division A will cross path on May 5 at 3pm for the other finals berth.

Meanwhile, Division B will start its playoff round this Sunday.

No. 1 Shirley's FC will take on No. 4 CNMI Women's National Team at 7pm, while No. 2 Sun Palace will fight No. 3 Pacific Islands Club at 1pm. Winners of these matches will square off on May 19 for the division championship this season.

Shirley's wrapped up the regular season with a 5-0-1 record, while Sun Palace held at 4-0-2 slate, and PIC had a 3-0-3 card. The CNMI Women's National Team failed to win a single match in the regular season.

Over 60 runners join SDA 5K Hope Run

More than 60 runners participated in the 10th Annual Saipan Seventh Day Adventist School 5K Hope Run held last April 14.

Perennial middle distance races winner Kosuke Sato led the finishers list of the run that started at the Garapan Fishing Base and ended at Micro Beach, as he clocked in at 20:48.

Sato was awarded a medal along with the Top 10 finishers overall (men and women's combined). Charlie Sendin timed in at 21:33 to rank second and was followed by Ayano Braxton (23:50), Frank Diesta (24:33), Steven Pixley (24:48), Eric Mahinay (25:20), Aris Oris (25:41), Chiharu Sato (27:19), Floro Derexes (28:09), and J.J. Sablan (28:21).

In the 14 and under age group, Taiga Scoggins was the first finisher after checking in at 28:27. Joining him in the Top 10 were Tiana Cabrera (29:11), Rex Pixley (29:55), Gabriel Pelardo (30:54), Gwampil Son (31:09), Sephson Lakjohn (31:27), Melvin Han (32:29), Kazuki Kamegai (37:55), Kyle Diesta (38:01), and Michelle Chen (38:40).

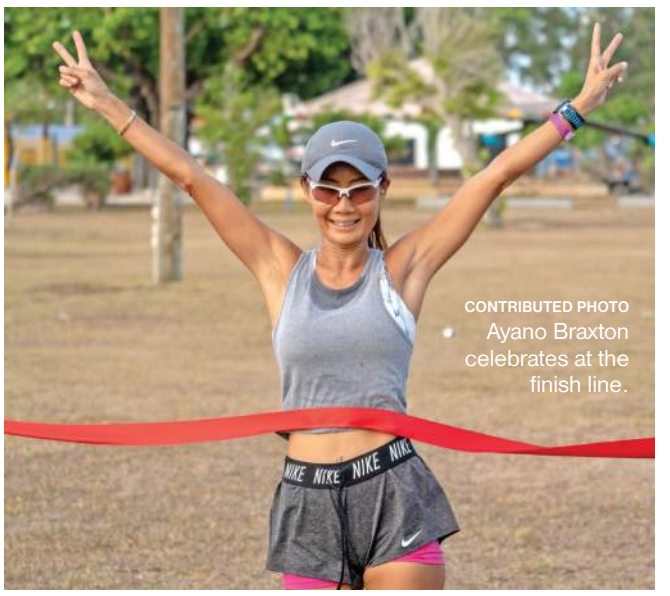
"We want to thank all the runners, parents, and overall supporters that made this event possible. The school is especially grateful to Saipan SDA Clinic for matching the amount raised for this event for a grand total of $9,480. Thank you for your continued support to our school," SDA School public relations assistant Dorlin Duran said.

The entire proceeds from the event will go to the Hope Run Scholarship, which provides financial aid to SDA students.

The SDA 5K Hope Run was supported by Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, McDonald's Saipan, National Office Supply, Powerade, SDA Clinic, Glimpses Advertising, Foremost, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Kanoa Resort, Docomo Pacific, Herman's Modern Bakery, Seatouch, Let's Go Tour, Goris Missions, Joy 89.9 FM, I Love Saipan, Hardt Eye Clinic, Java Joe's, MARPAC, Ace Hardware, Mango Six Café, and J.C. Tenorio Enterprises. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The Top 10 finishers (overall and 14 and under age group) pose for a group photo after receiving their medals.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kosuke Sato leads runners on their way to Micro Beach.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ayano Braxton celebrates at the finish line.

Young runners keep a steady pace on their way to Micro Beach. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Runners register at the Garapan Fishing Base. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Runners head out to the course during the 10th Annual Saipan Seventh Day Adventist School 5K Hope Run held last April 14. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

More bad news for Yanks: Judge out indefinitely

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Celtics beat Pacers, complete rare series sweep

PAGE 25

Gregoire survives super tiebreak

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Anthony Gregoire and David Kwon had a duel for the ages with the former escaping with a 6-3, 2-6, 22-20 victory to take the boys U14 singles title in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Yes, the scores were 22-20 in the super-tiebreaker third set, as the two players went back and forth in the decider that seemingly had no ending until Gregoire hit a volley to finally wrap up the game after nearly three hours.

"I approached the net and I made him go to the right side, while I dropped the volley to the left," said Gregoire, adding that it took them around 45 minutes to finish just the super-tiebreaker third set

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Anthony Gregoire, seen here going for a return in a tournament last month, won his first U14 singles title this season after beating David Kwon last Sunday in the 2019 DFS CNMI Junior Championships at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

The hard-earned win gave Gregoire a perfect 3-0 record in the round-robin competition and his first championship in the division in the last local tournament of the season. The tiring victory was also the only extended match Gregoire played in the age group, as he earlier dominated Cory Lee, 6-0, 6-0, and Eubin Park, 6-0, 6-0. Kwon routed, too Park, 6-0, 6-0, and Lee, 6-1, 6-0, to set up the Sunday showdown against Gregoire for the division championship.

"It felt great to come out on top of a tough game. I have a very strong opponent and that made the victory even more

See GREGOIRE on Page 26

ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
Mt. Carmel School's Derek Sasamoto pulls up for a jumper during their middle school game against the Seventh Day Adventist School in the CCOPSA caging yesterday at the SDA court in Chalan Kiya.

Knights upend Guardians

By ROBY N. PAMINTUAN
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CORRESPONDENT

Mount Carmel School outgunned Seventh Day Adventist, 30-13, during a game in the Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association Middle School Basketball League yesterday at SDA's court.

The Knights leveraged an 11-2 scoring run in the first quarter to breeze past the Guardians and notched their fifth win in six games. SDA skidded to a 1-6 record.

Raphael Galang scored 5 straight points off a corner trey and a fast-break layup, while Leo Naraja picked up an errant pass and cruised for a breakaway layup to kick things off for Mt. Carmel. Derek Sasamoto then swished in two midrange jumpers to put the Knights on top, 11-0, while Hiro Rechucher's putback in the closing seconds of the first quarter, finally broke

See KNIGHTS on Page 26

M-League starts playoff round

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2019 Spring Men's M-League will return to action this Thursday with Division A teams starting the playoff round at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Kicking off the single-elimination playoffs of the league that took a brief break last Sunday in observance of the Lenten season, are the Old B Bank and Korean Football Association, as they square off at 6:30pm and battle for one of the three remaining Final Four berths in Division A.

The Old B Bank finished third in the team standings after the round-robin regular season, earning a 3-0-3 win-draw-loss record, while KFAS

See M-LEAGUE on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Korean Football Association on Saipan's Don Cabrera kicks the ball during their Division A game against Matansa Football Club in the 2019 Spring Men's M-League last April 14 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville. KFAS will face the Old B Bank this Thursday to start the playoff round in the league.